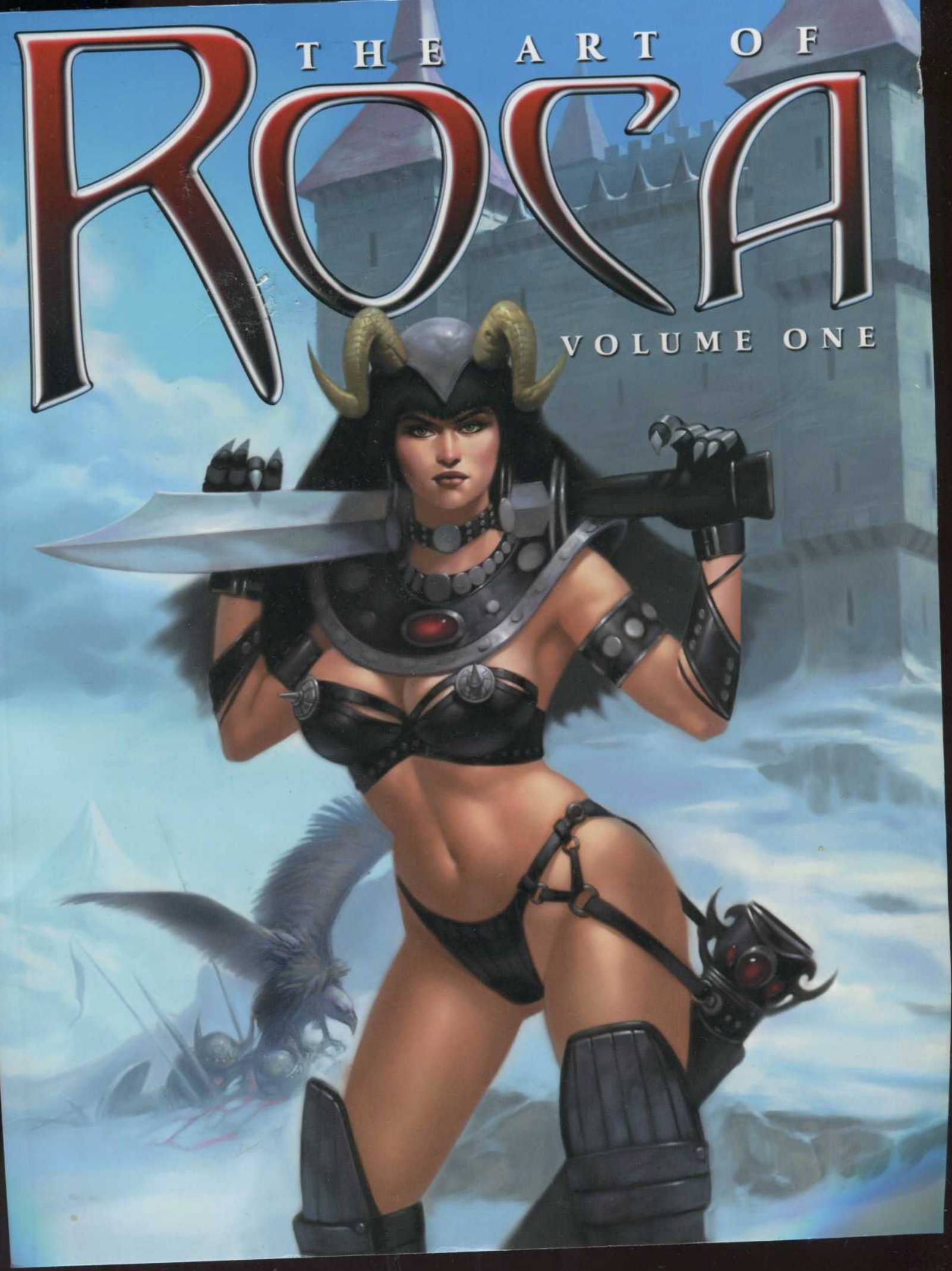
# THE ART OF ROCA

## VOLUME ONE



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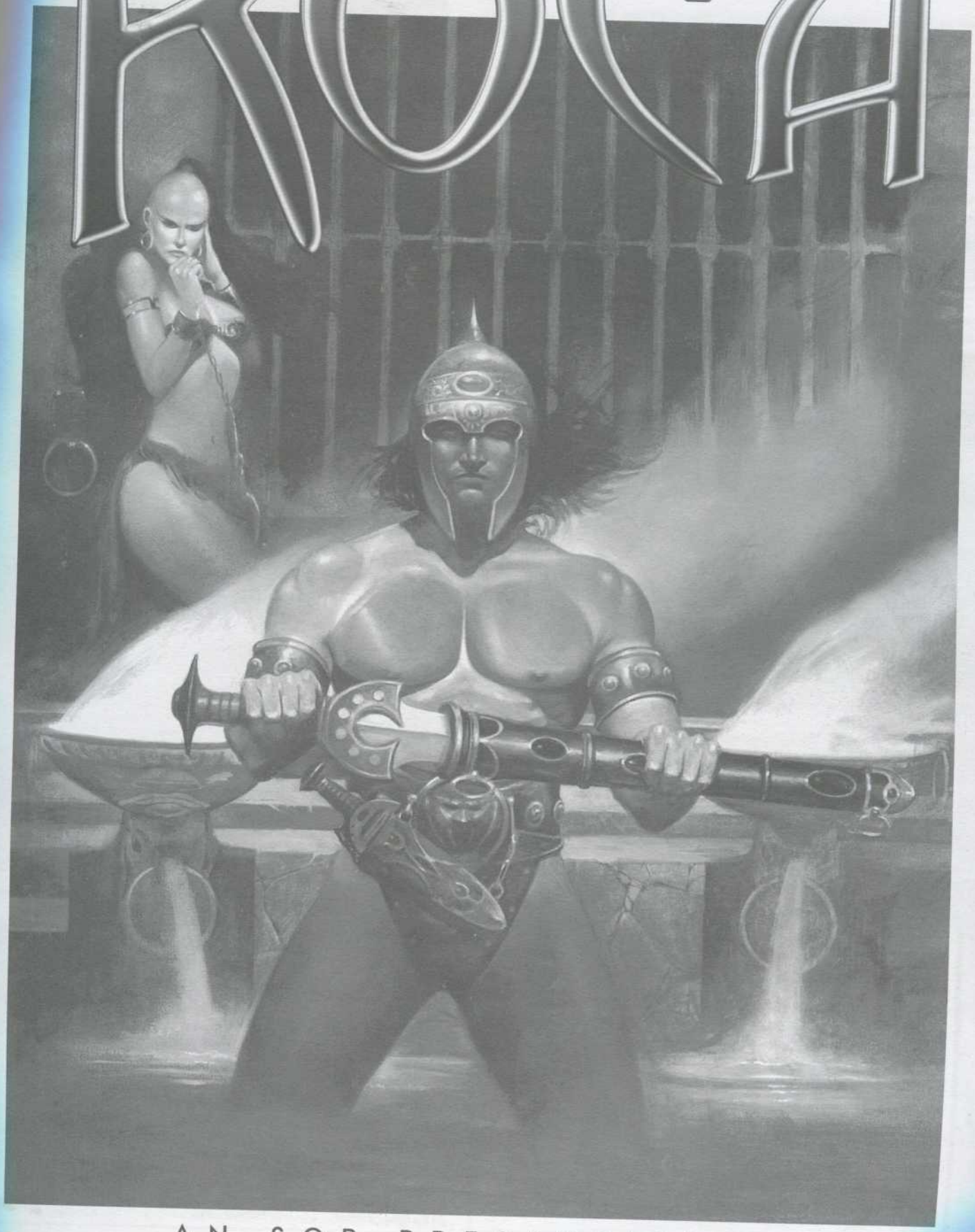


AN SQP PRESENTATION

Luis Martínez Roca was born on the 23rd of October 1940 in the Barrio Gótico section of Barcelona, Spain. In the short span of less than sixty years, he had actually done what most of us only fantasize doing, and "followed his bliss". By embracing his passions, he created a life, a family, and a career that was joyous and rewarding.

Early on, his father wanted young Luis to become a chemical engineer, but Roca had other plans. In a bold move that comes from being too young and honestly gifted, he left high school to pursue a career in art. With little formal training, most teenagers would have fallen flat on their faces, but by the age of sixteen Luis had actually secured a steady position at Bruguera Editorial, a major magazine publisher in Spain. His work would appear in such youth-oriented publications like Sissi, Romántica, and Claro de Luna. How could this "kid" get so many assignments? The fact that his own friends referred to him as "The Earl" may have something to do with it. For such a young man, Roca was not only charming, polite, and wise beyond his years, but by nineteen was sporting an elegant mane of completely white hair. Not your average teenager, to be sure!

Having succeeded in his native Spain, Luis set his sights on bigger goals, which would mean traveling to the United Kingdom. Once there, his mastery of the English language, coupled with his self-possessed personality got him jobs at such prestigious firms as Fleetway Editorial, Newnes & Pearson Ed, and D.C. Thomson. He shuttled like this between Barcelona and London from 1961 to 1969, fulfilling assignments and making new contacts. When he signed a contract with one of the major British tabloids, "The Sun", he got involved in a bit of publishing history.

Working on a daily comic strip called "Scarth - A.D. 2171", written by Jo Adamms, Roca illustrated the very first appearance of a female nude character in the British press. This bit of notoriety not only gave him worldwide attention, it put him in touch with Josep Toutain at Selecciones Ilustradas. Through Toutain, a central figure responsible for the success of many comic and fantasy artists in Europe, Roca finally had the chance to break into the U.S. market in magazines like "Creepy" and "Vampirella".

Luis continued expanding his worldly portfolio with the Italian editor Giorgio Cavedon from Milano who introduced him in the Italian artist community. The early Eighties brought him South American acknowledgment working at the Mexican newspaper Novedades, and at the Culture Ministry of Mexico D.C..

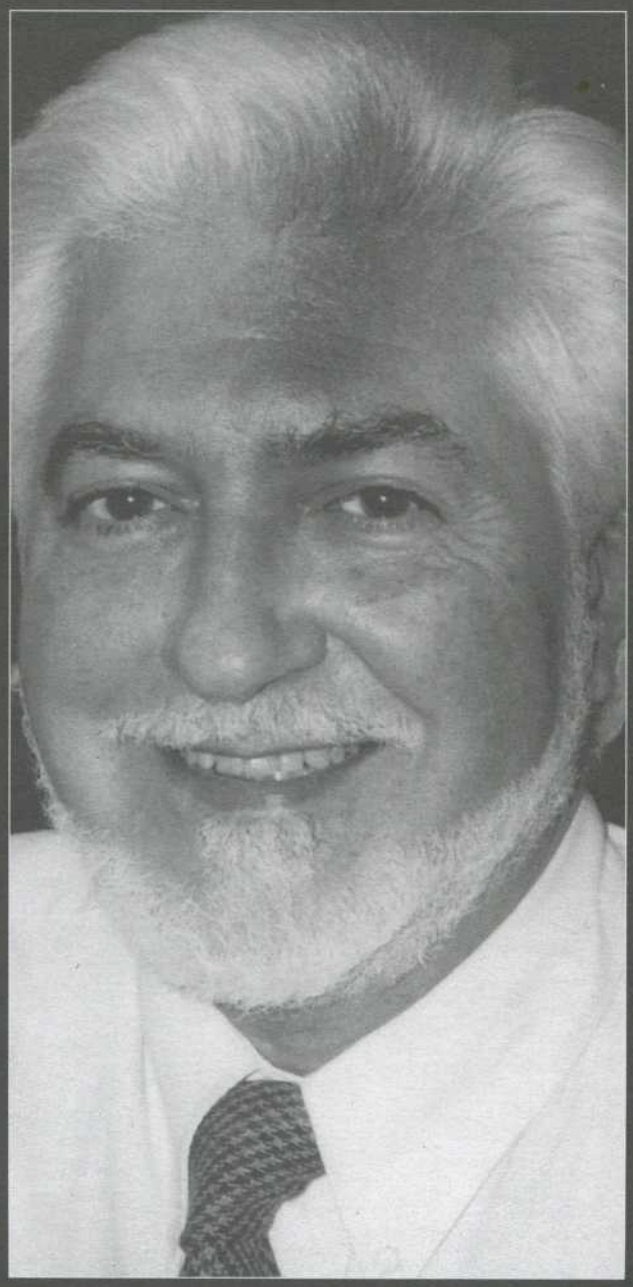
By the mid-Eighties, Roca's career had taken a new direction. Needing a break from comics, he decided to start painting. Once the word got out, he was getting cover work all over the world, like Jaguar Co. from Sweden, C.B. Films Filmayer Co. from Spain, Harlequin Books at Warner Books from the U.S., Conan Sphere Ed. from the U.K., Bastei from Germany, and so on.

He came back to comics in 1993 with the British strip "Ben & Katie" for The Daily Star newspaper. These strips, and the illustrations done for the SQP Gallery Girls books were his last works. On April 17th of 1998, he died suddenly, leaving a loving wife and two daughters, a lifetime of work and too many friends saddened by their loss.

As a testament to a life lived passionately and with grace, we present this collection of his drawings, sketches, and studies. It is only a small measure of the incomparable body of work Roca created. This book would not have been possible were it not for the assistance of Luis' wife Mariemma, and his two wonderful daughters Natalia and Mariemma. We sincerely thank them for their help, and hope our efforts show off "The Earl" in his very best light.

In a business often filled with ego and tantrums, Luis Roca floated above it all, with grace and charm. He was a "class act", and he will be missed.

Sal Quartuccio
Bob Keenan
Publishers



**Luis Martínez Roca**
**1940-1998**

# THE ART OF ROCA
## Volume One

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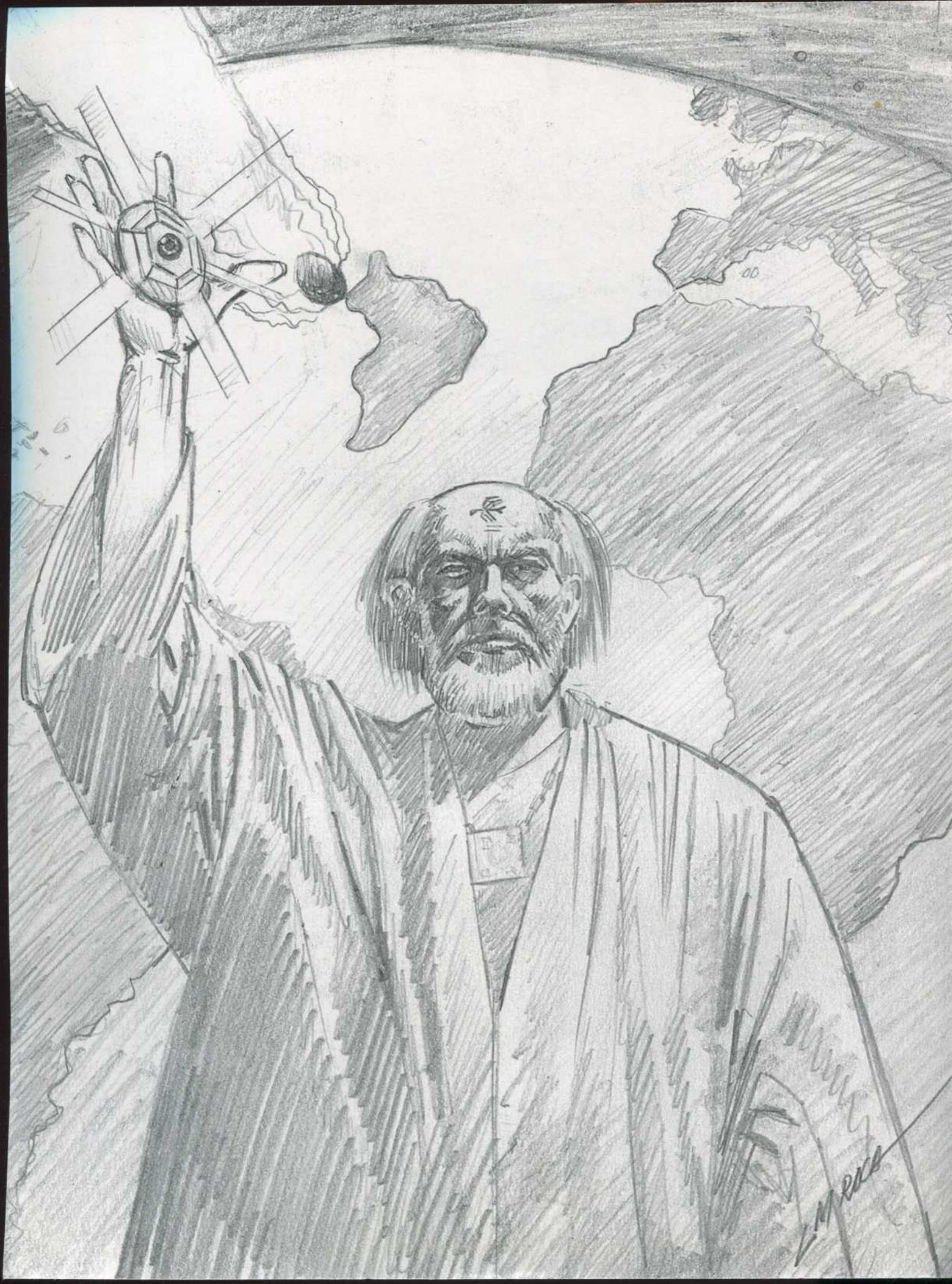

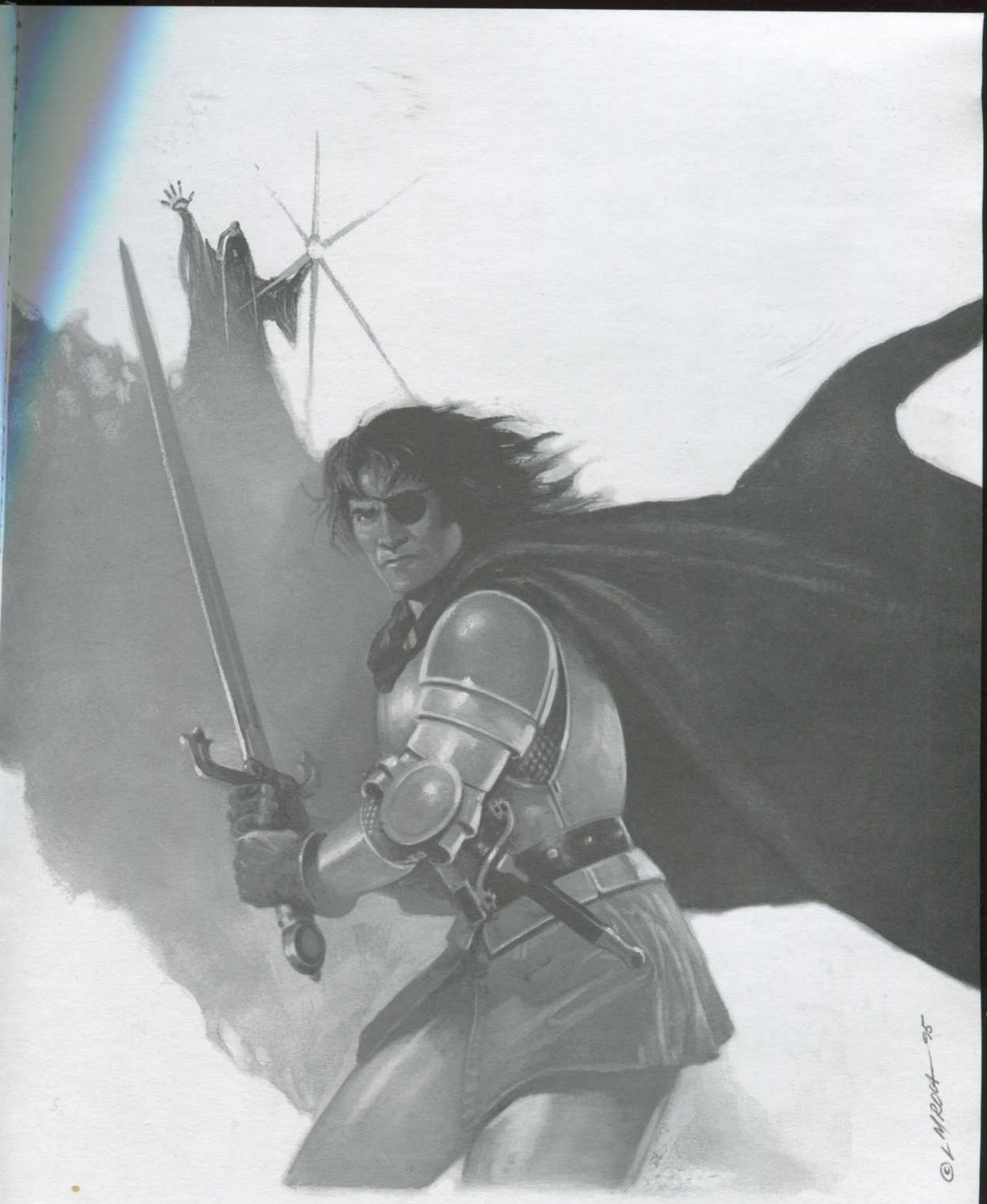
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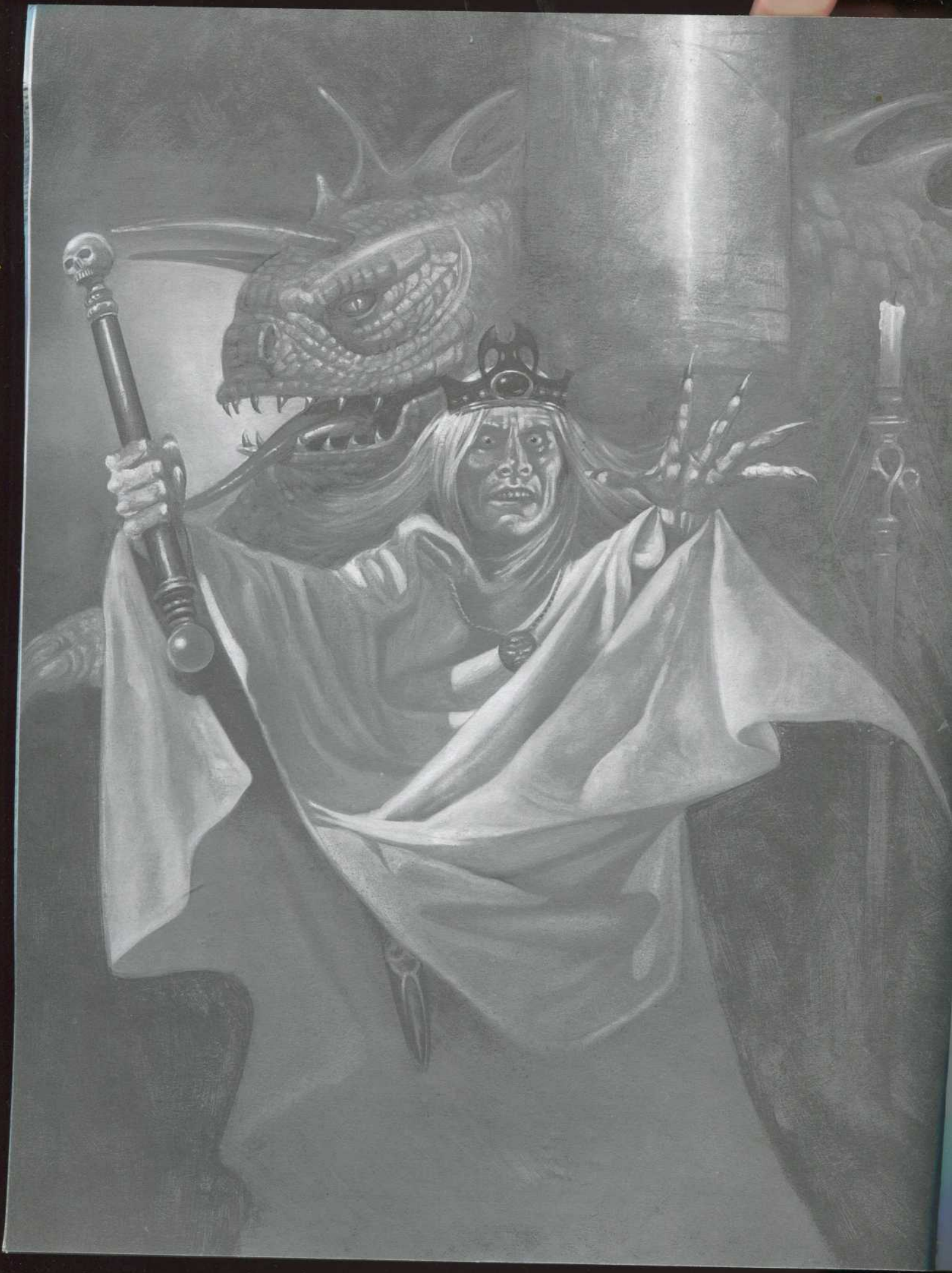

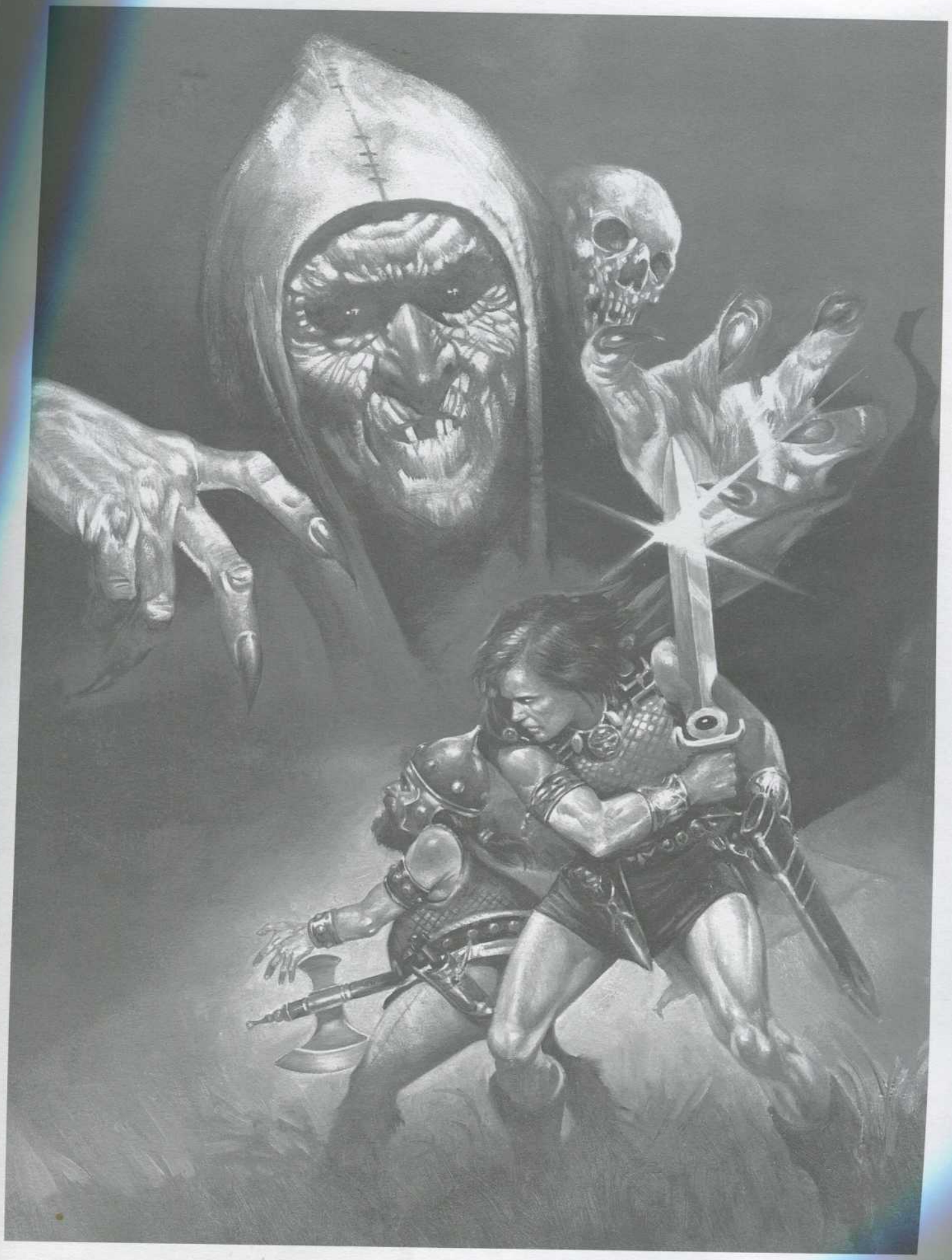

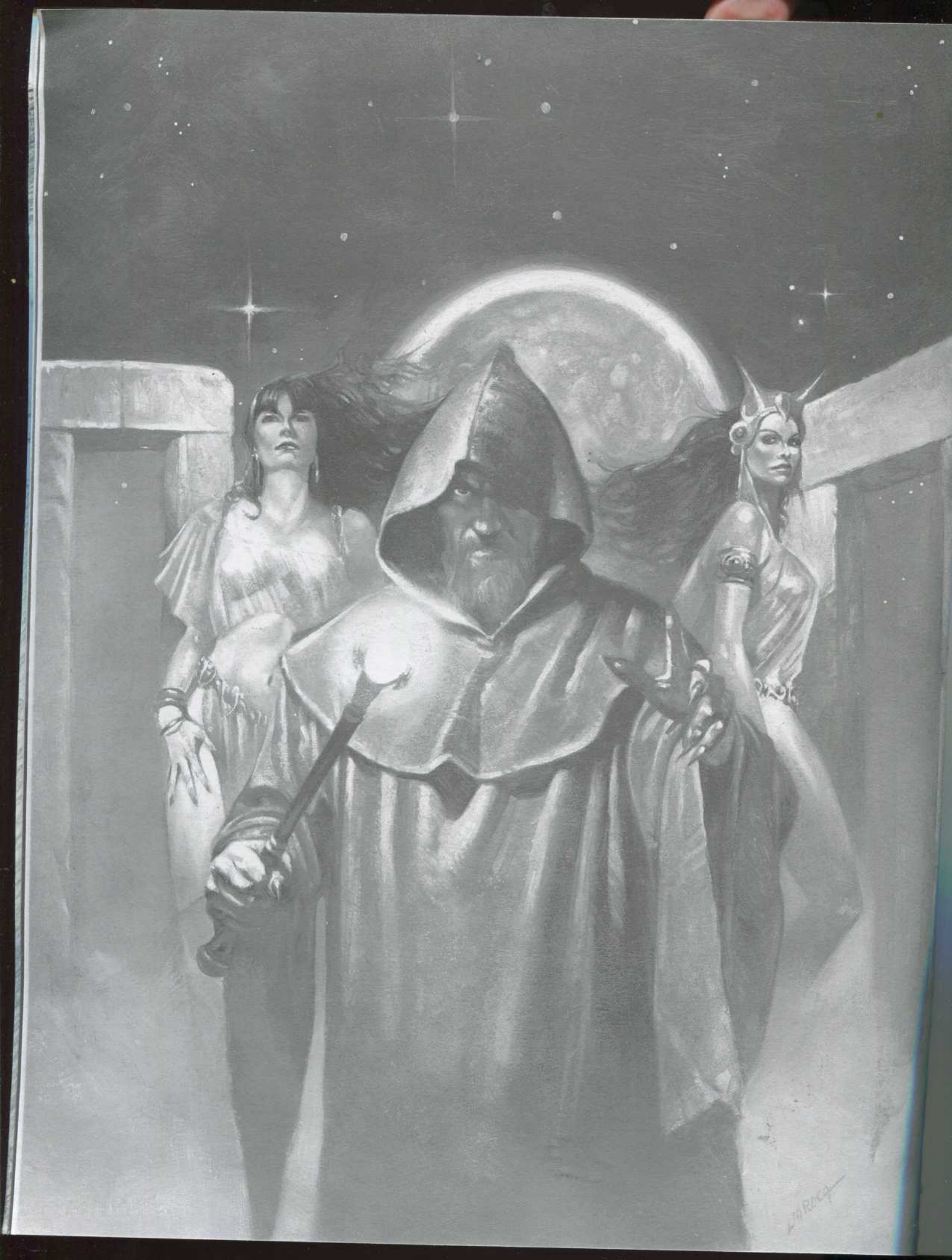

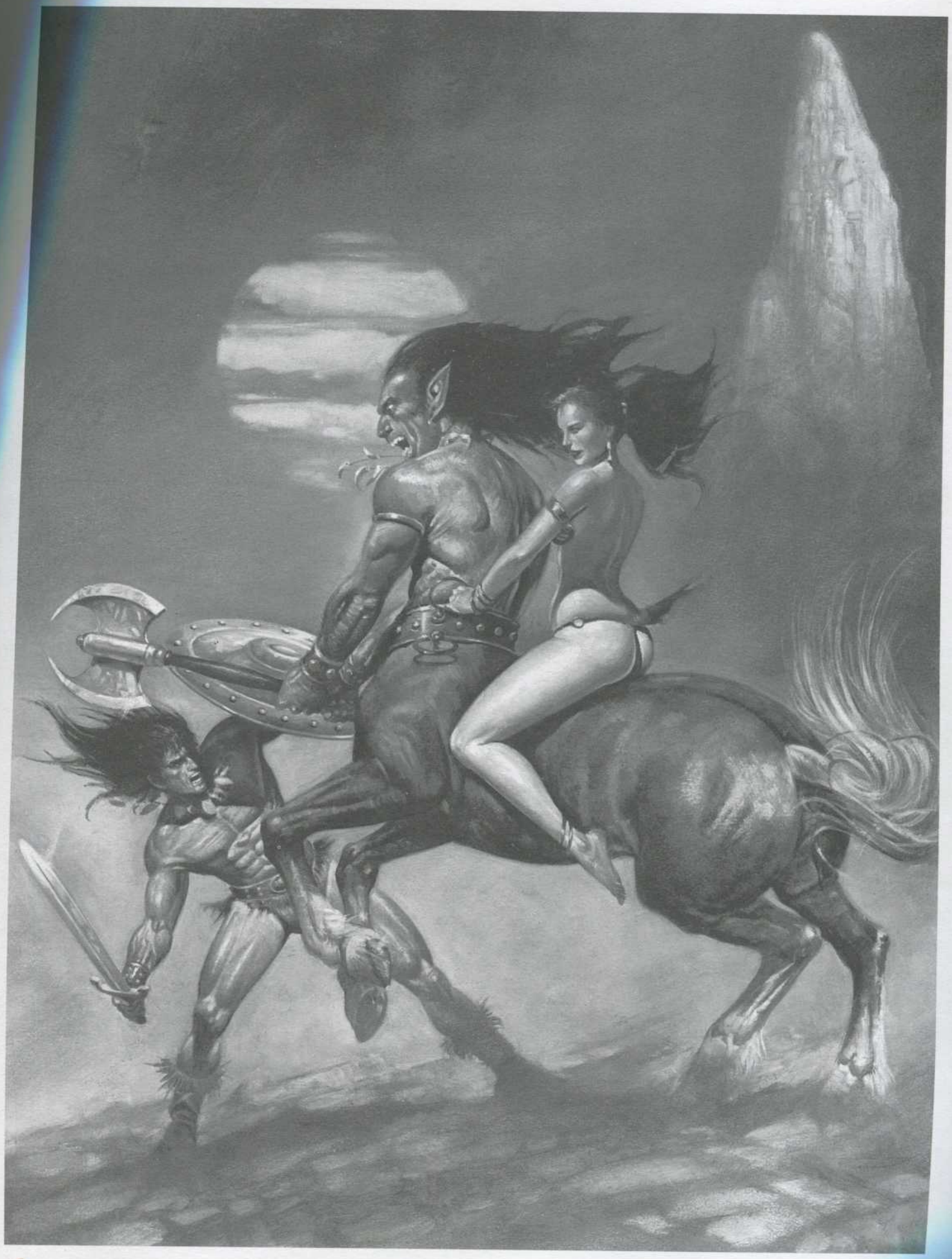

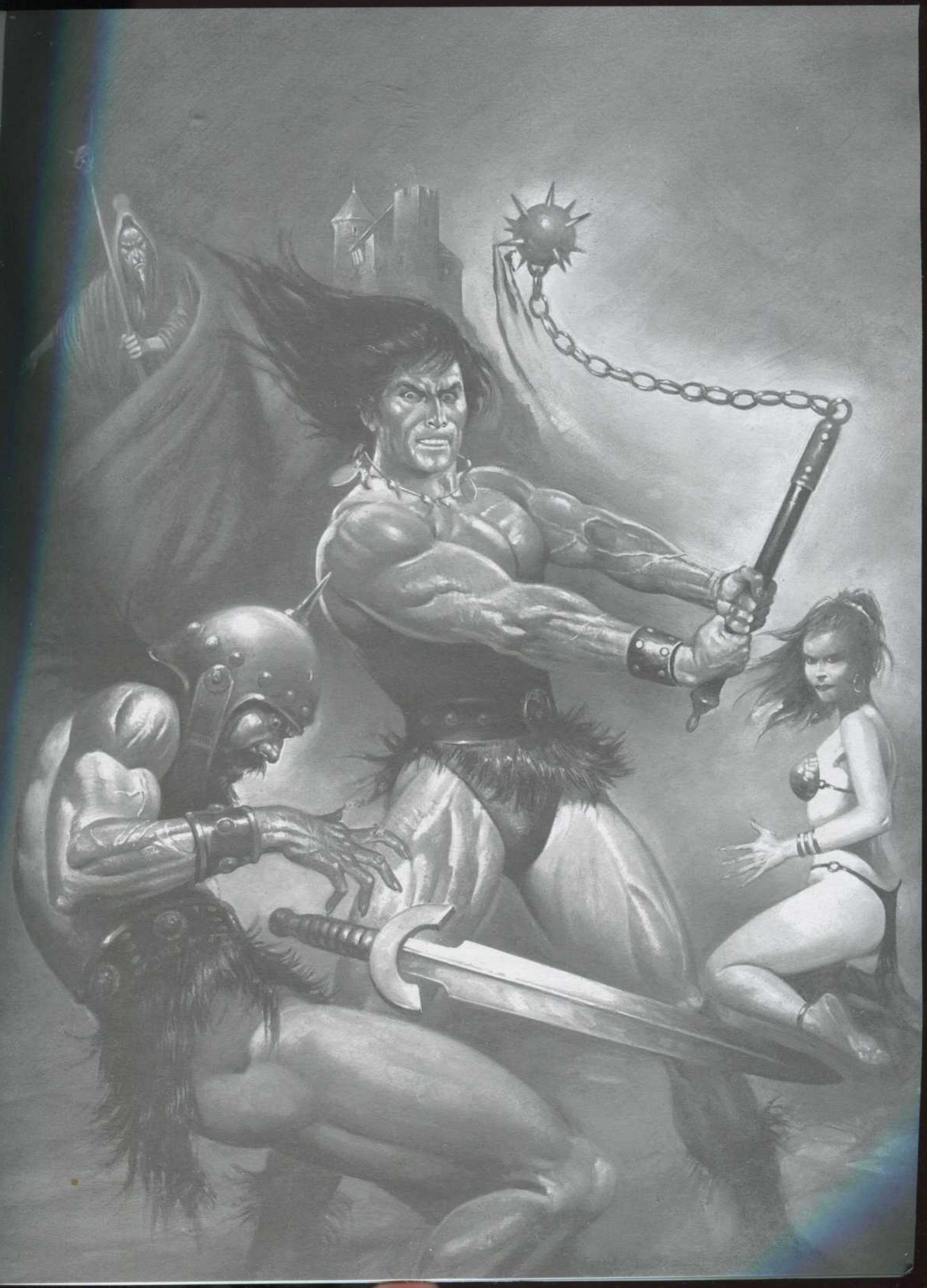

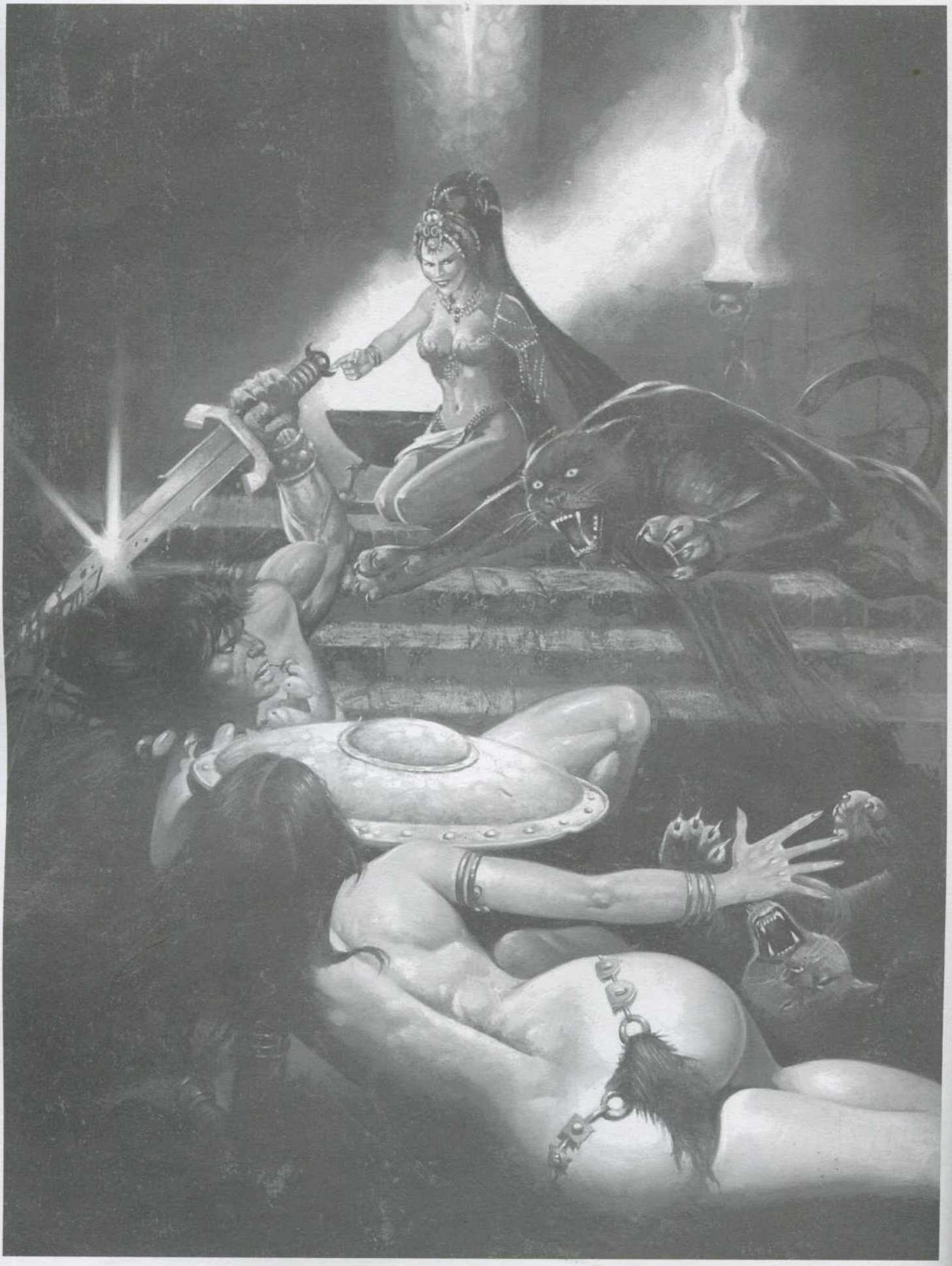

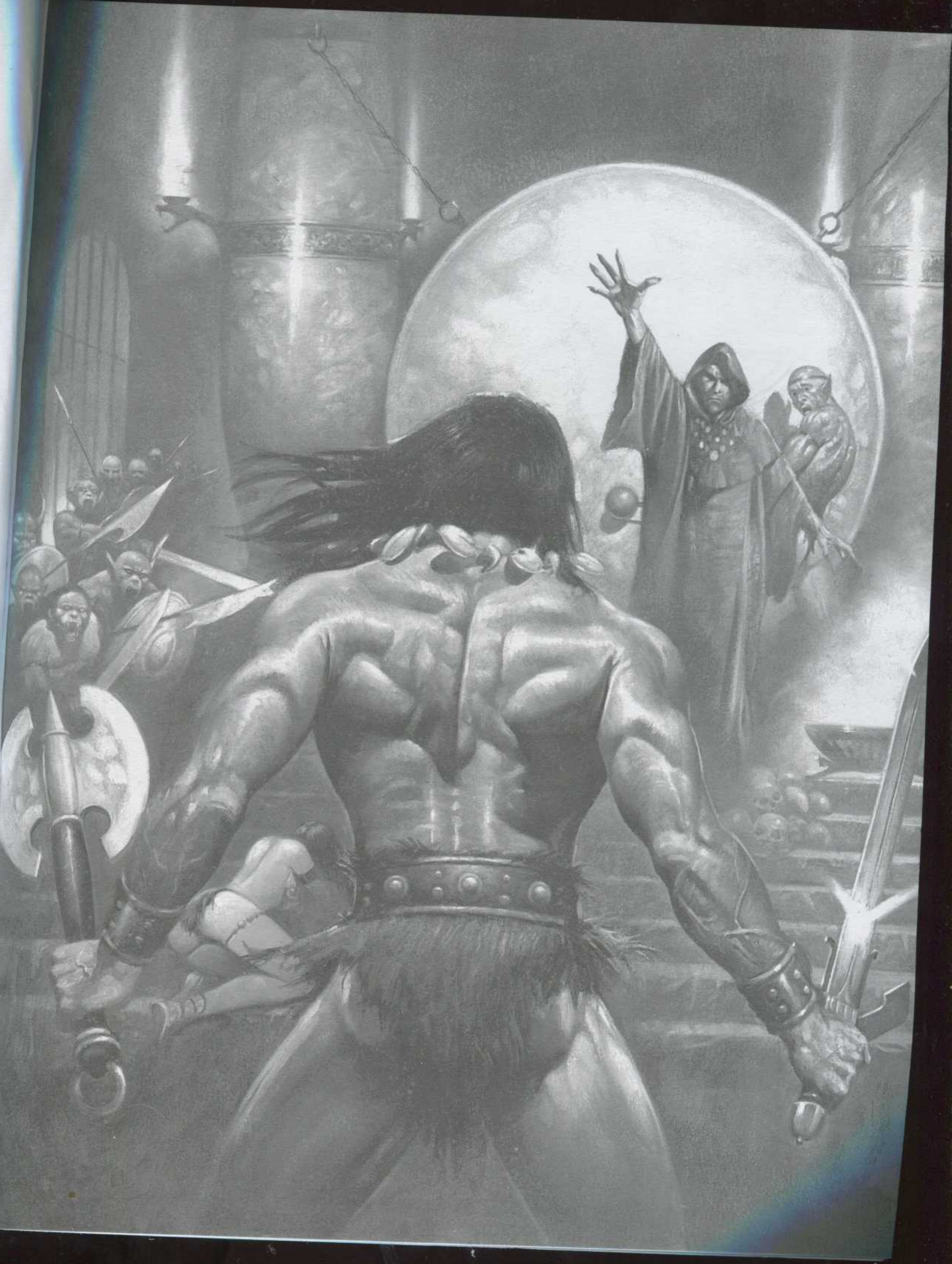

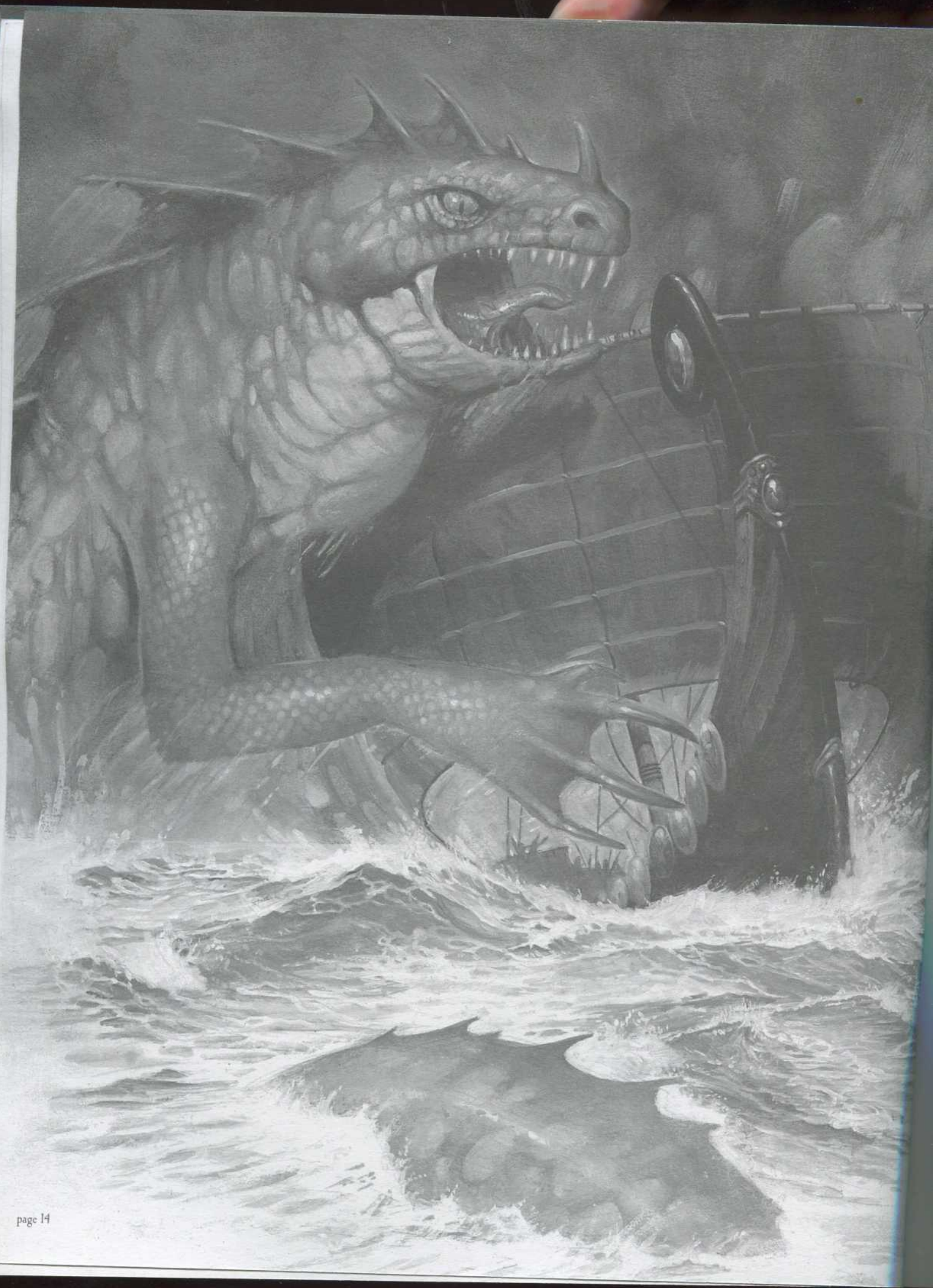

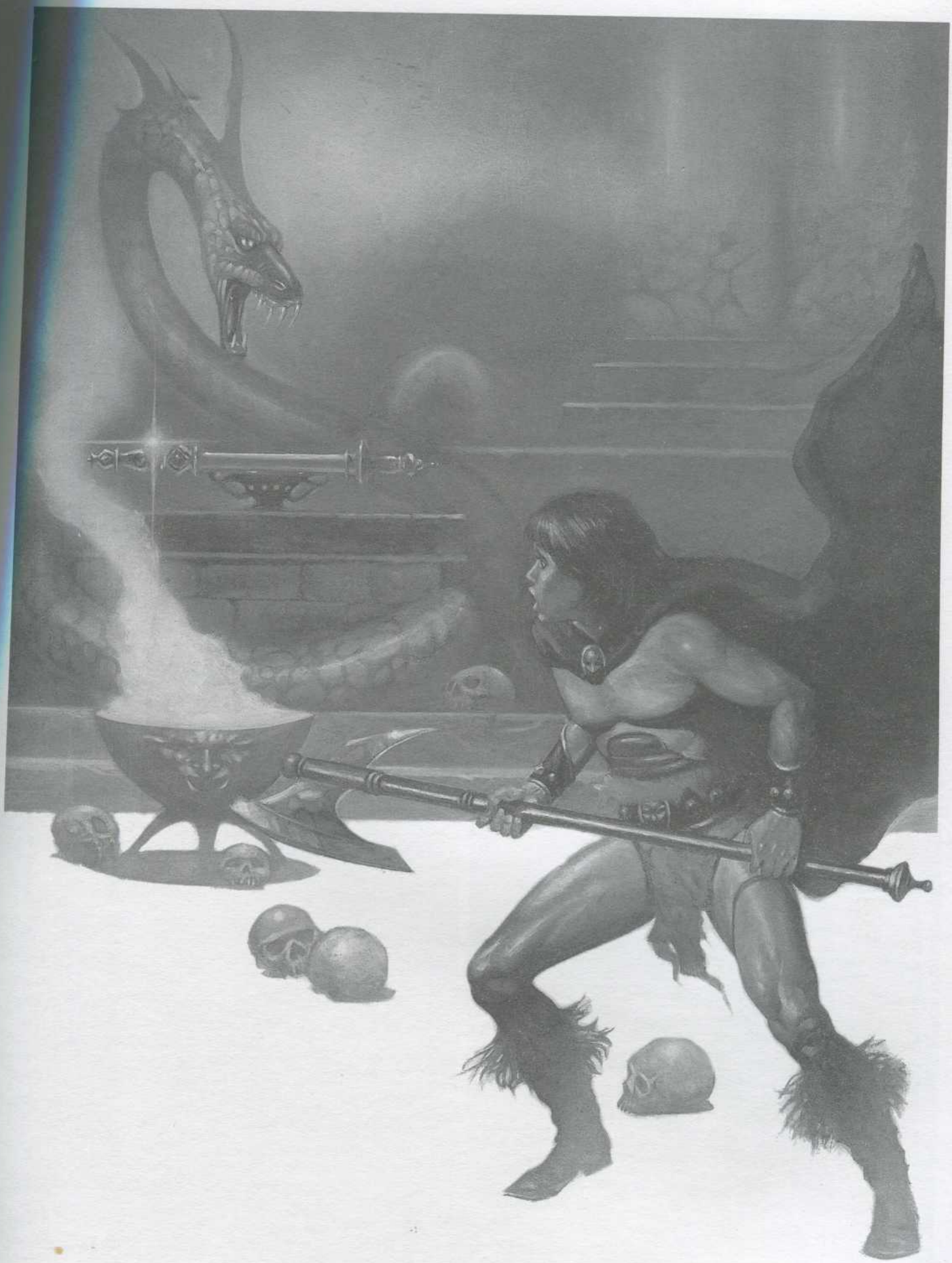

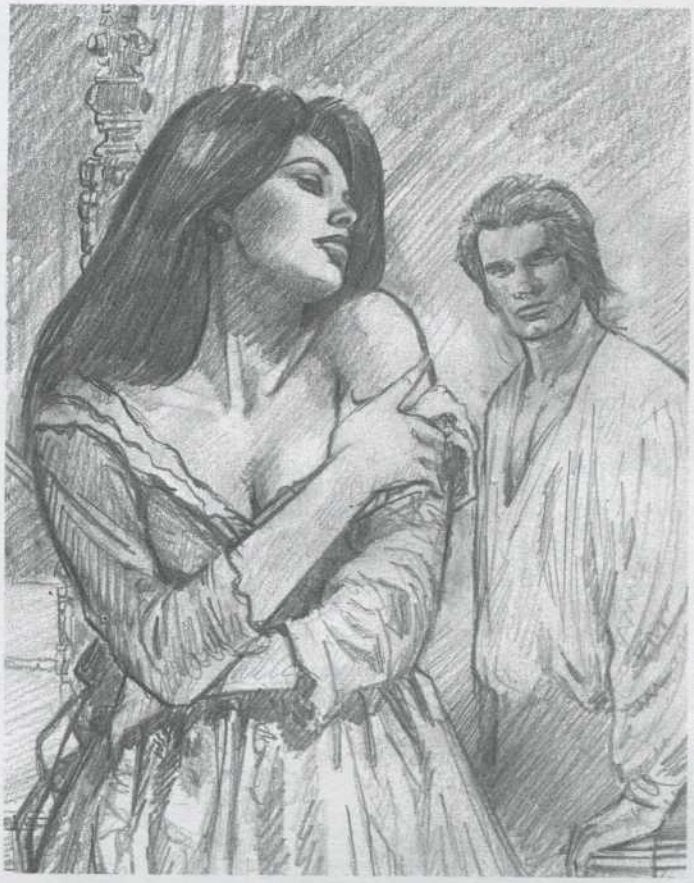

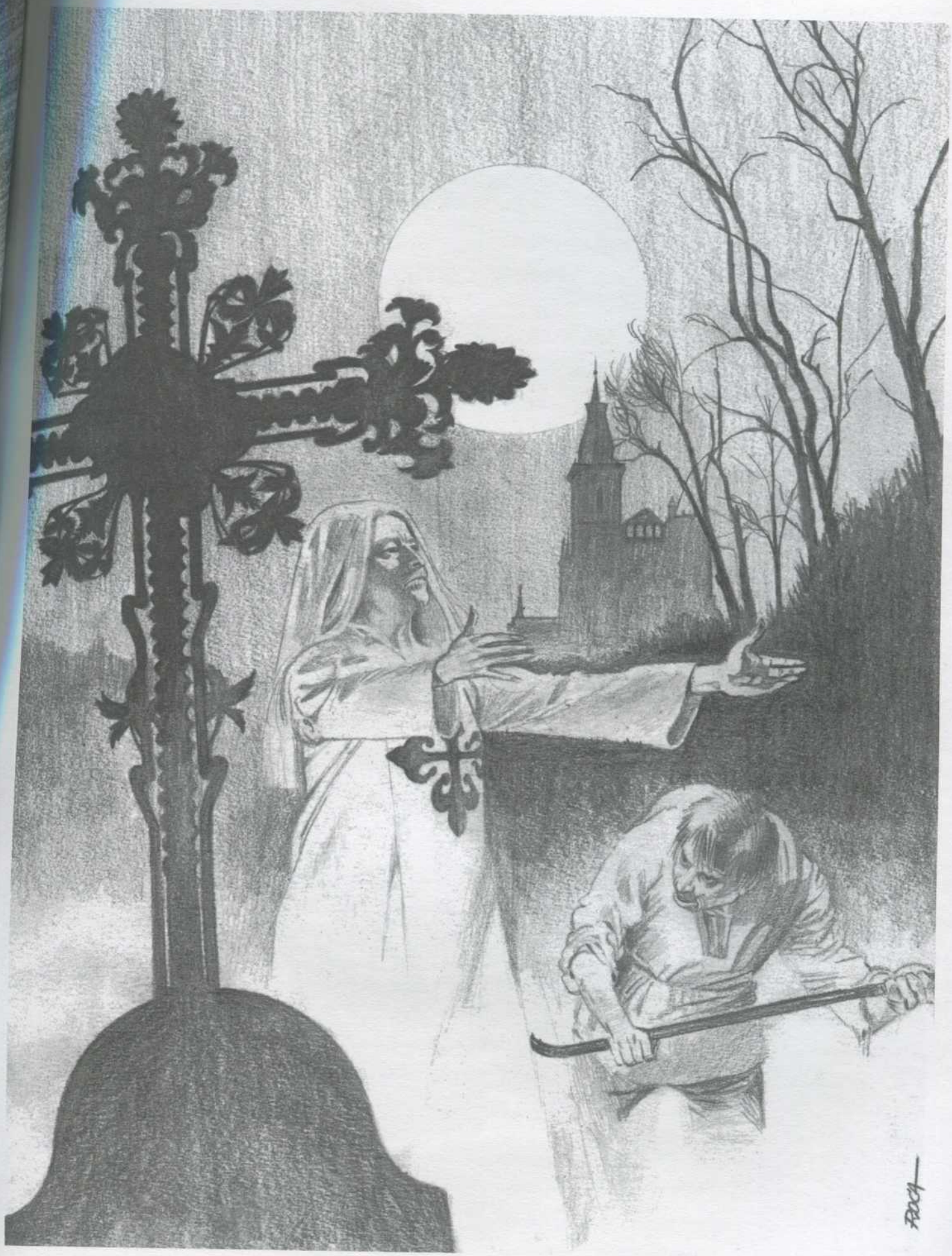

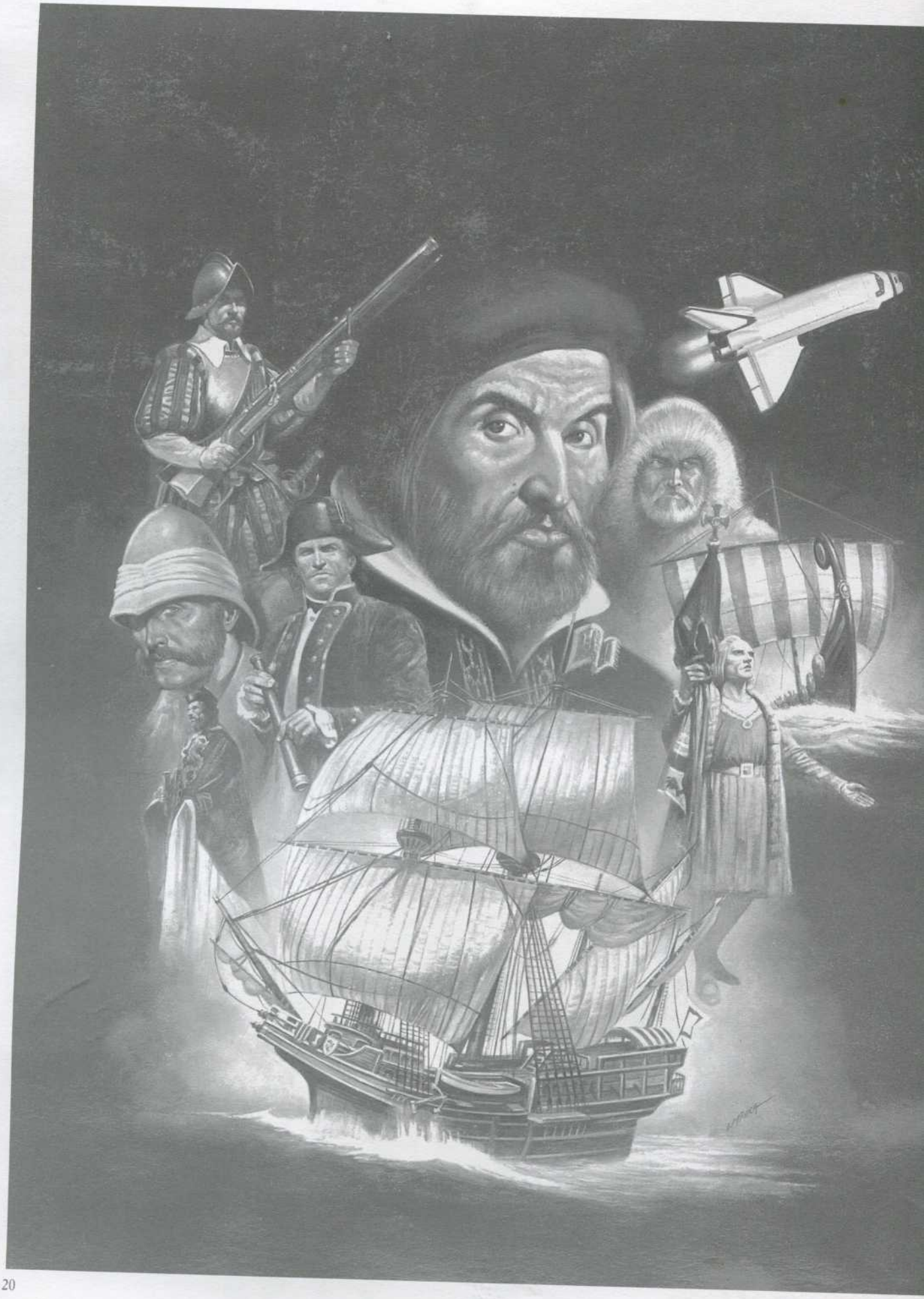

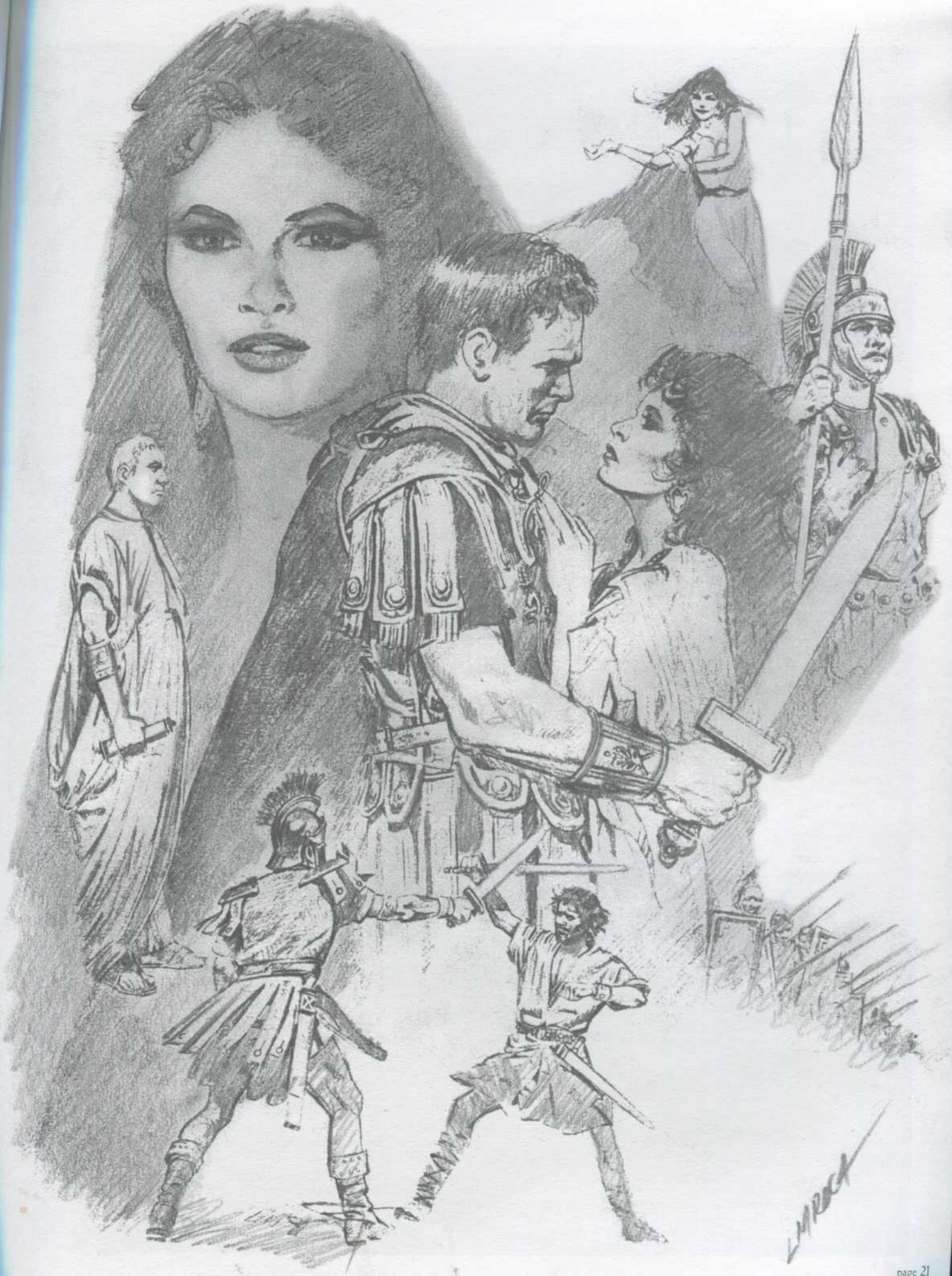
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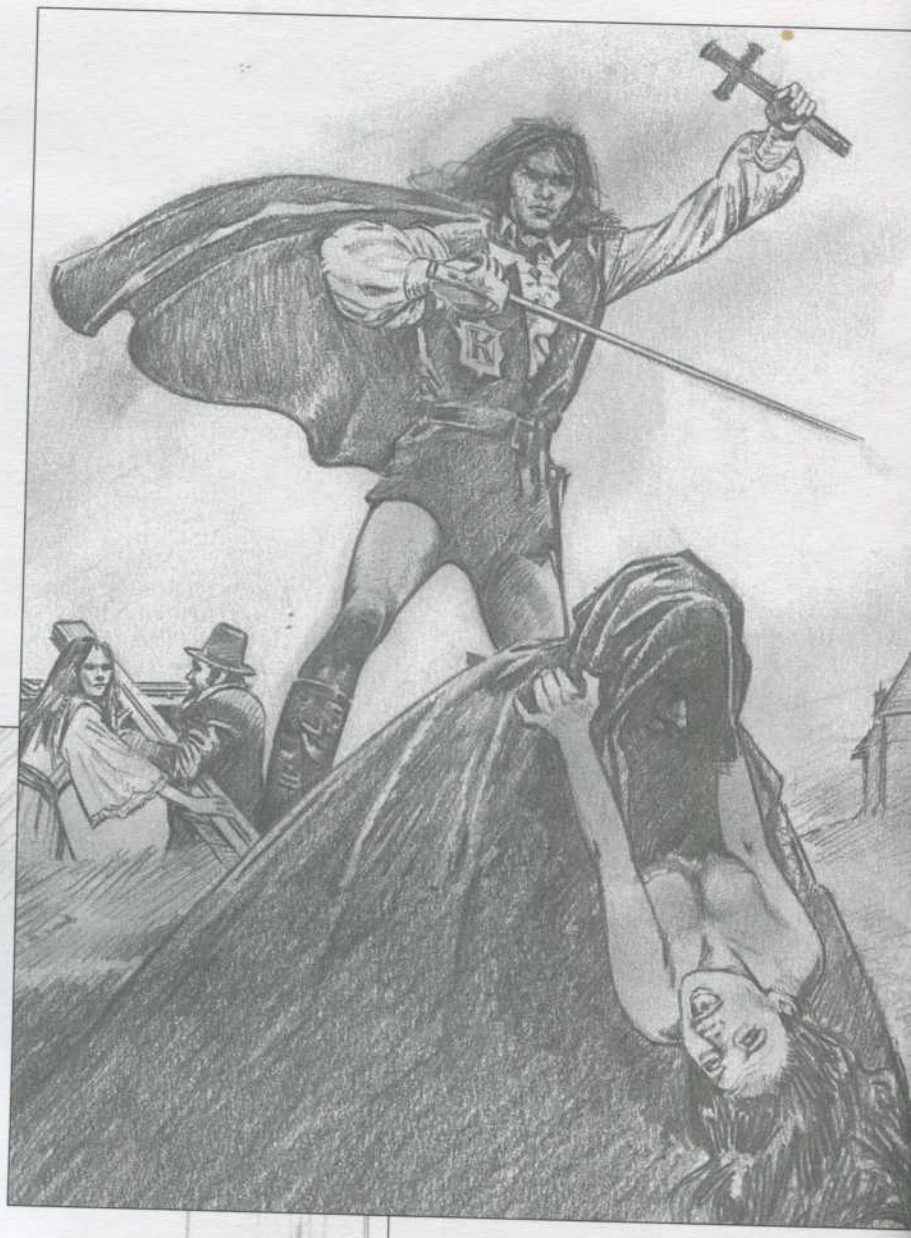

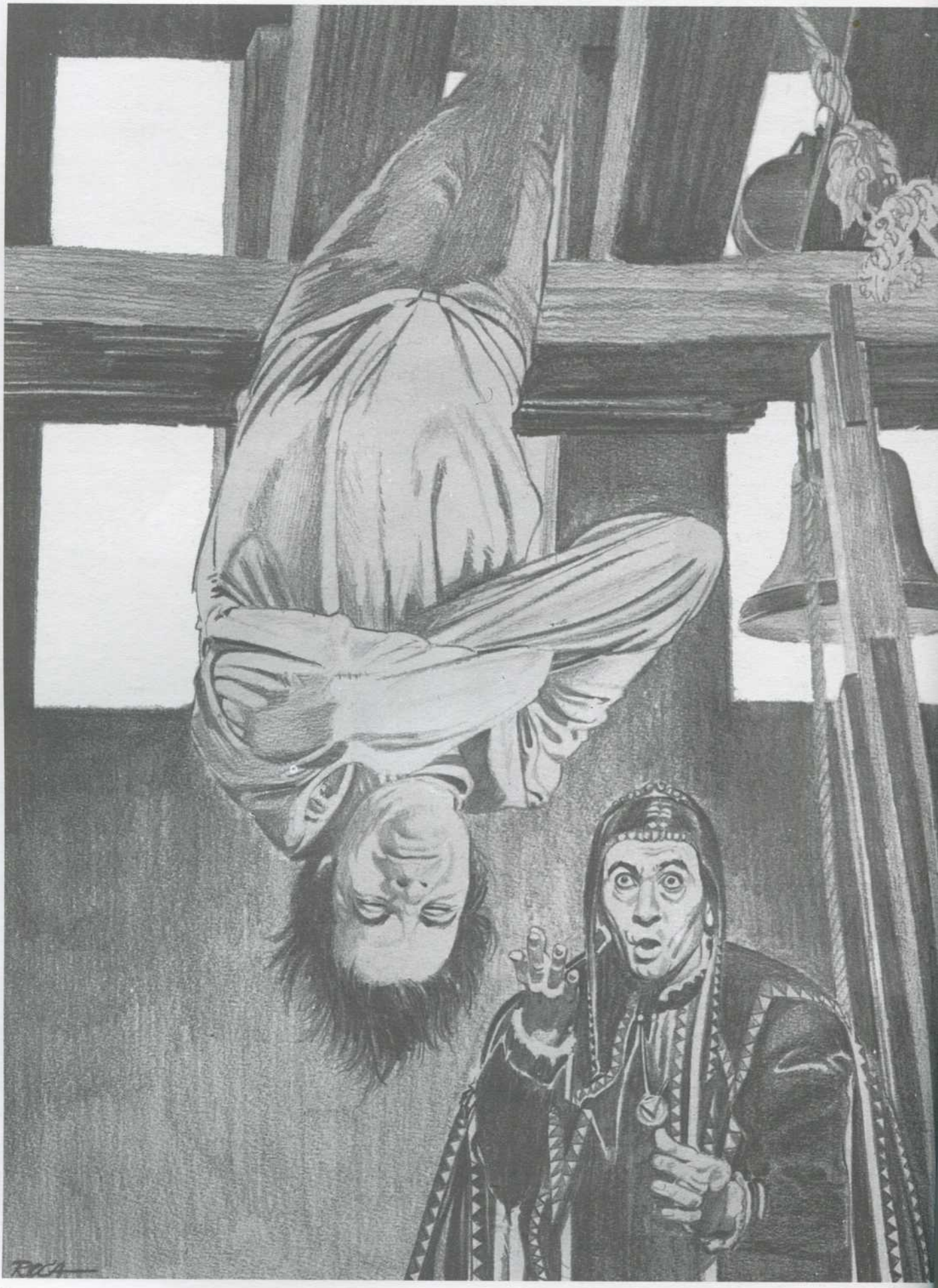
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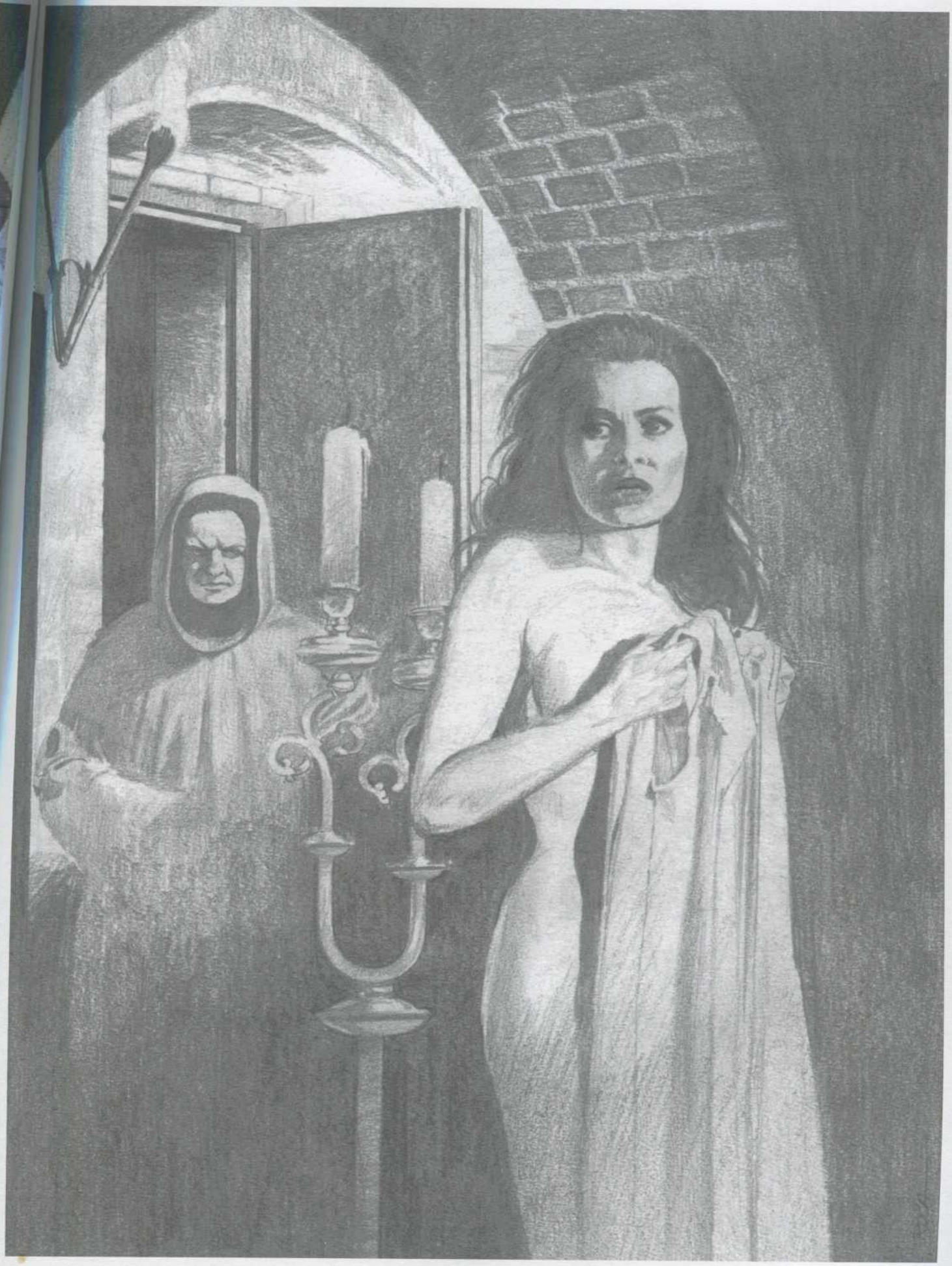

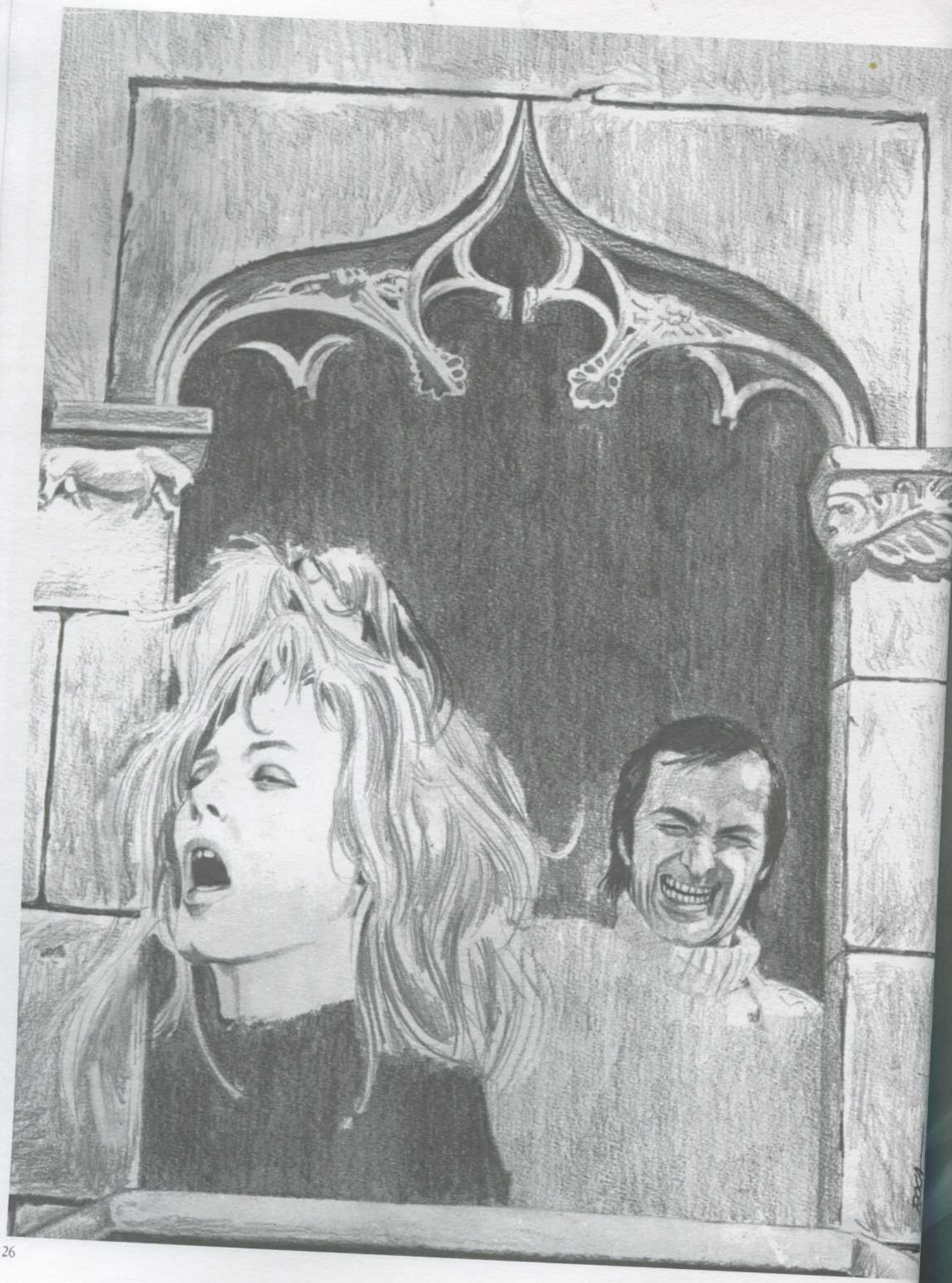

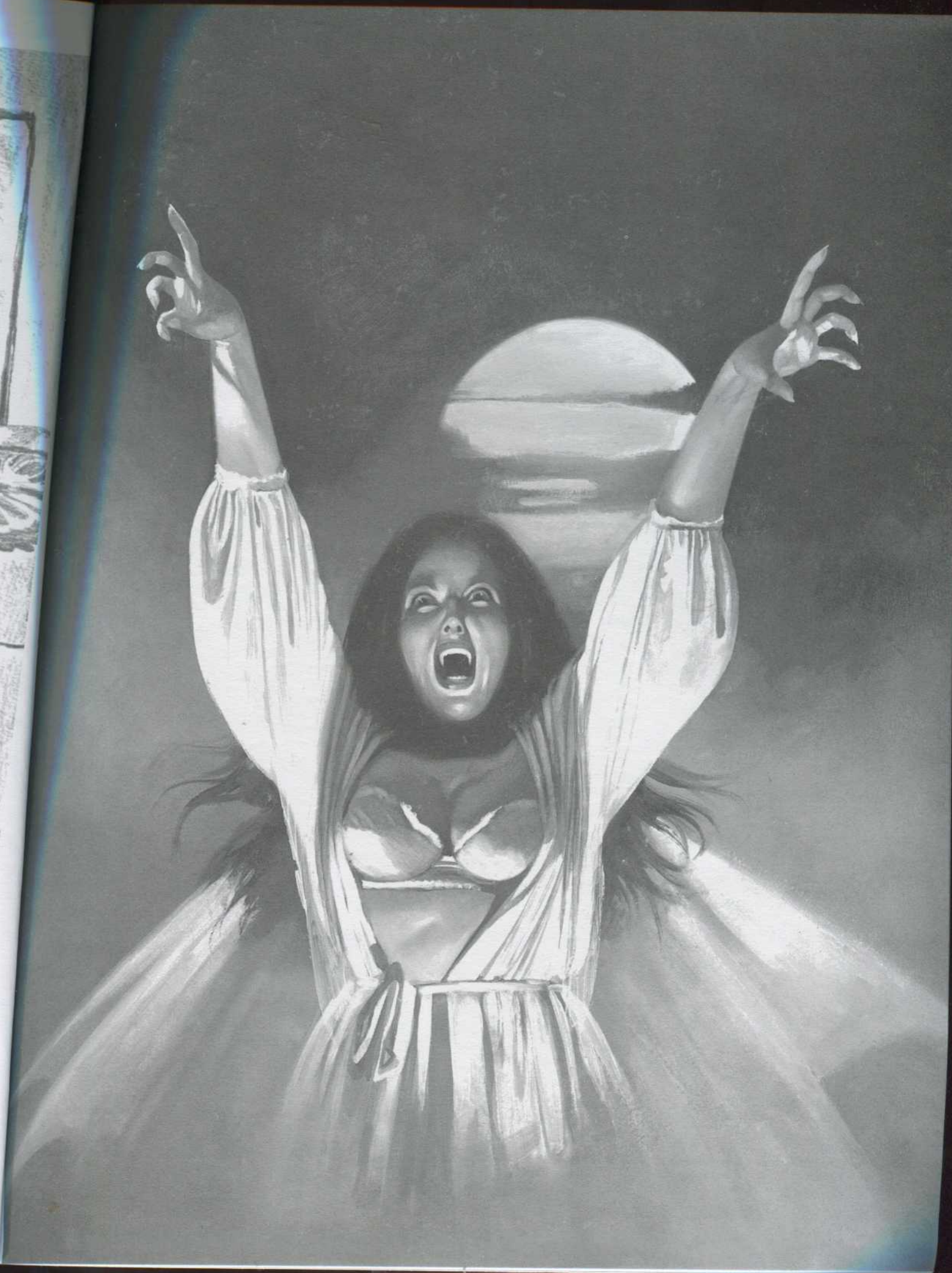

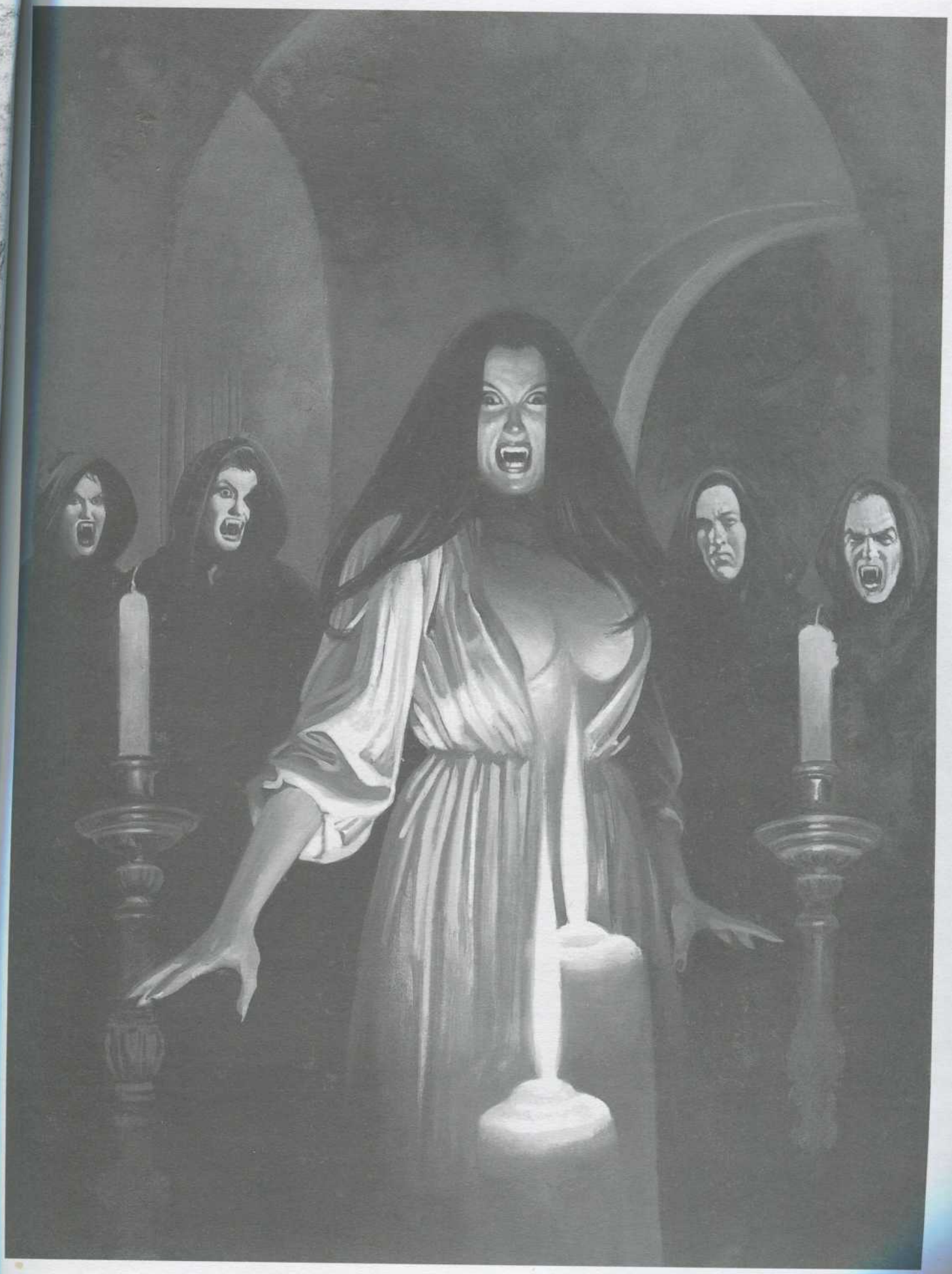

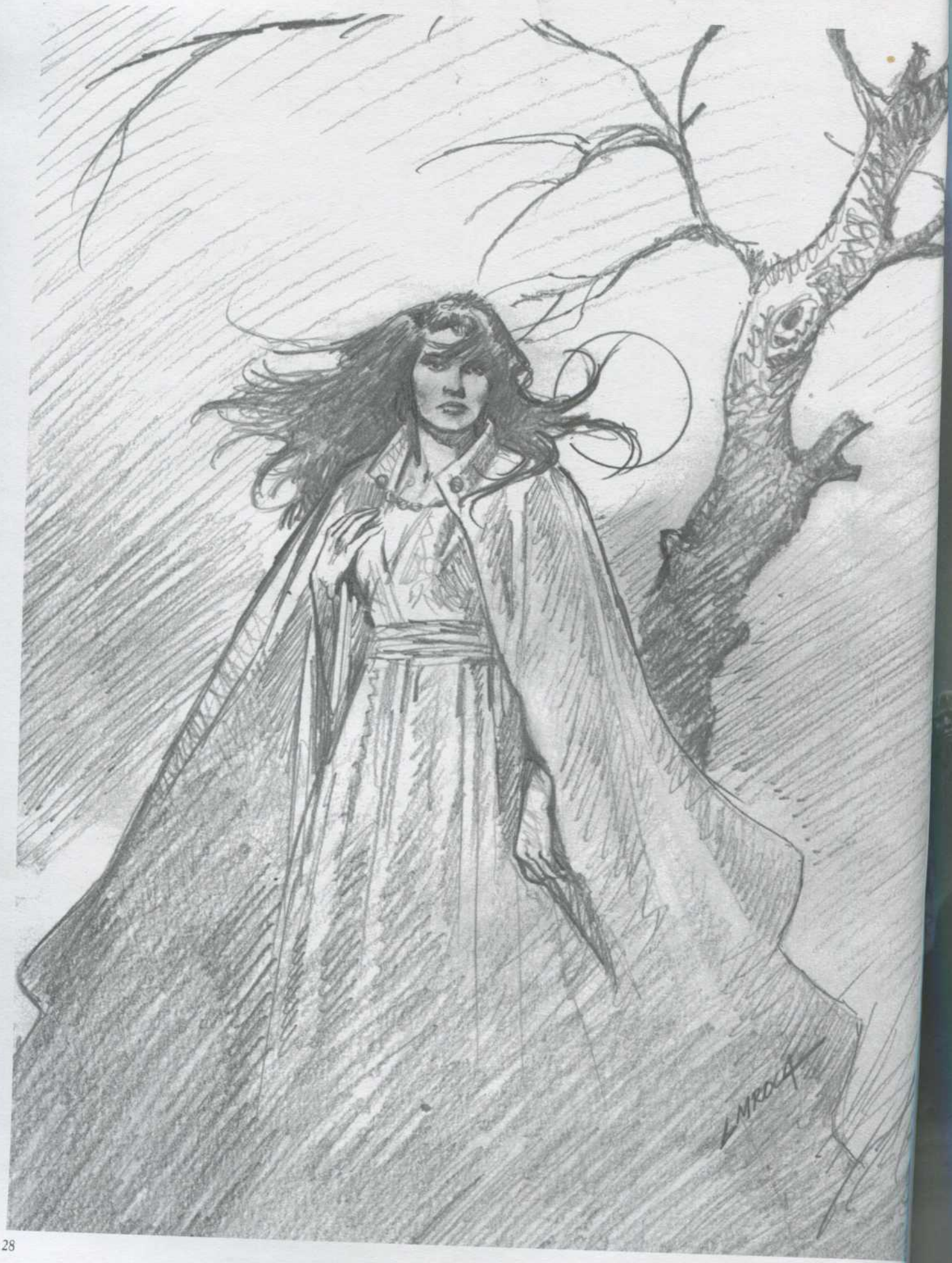
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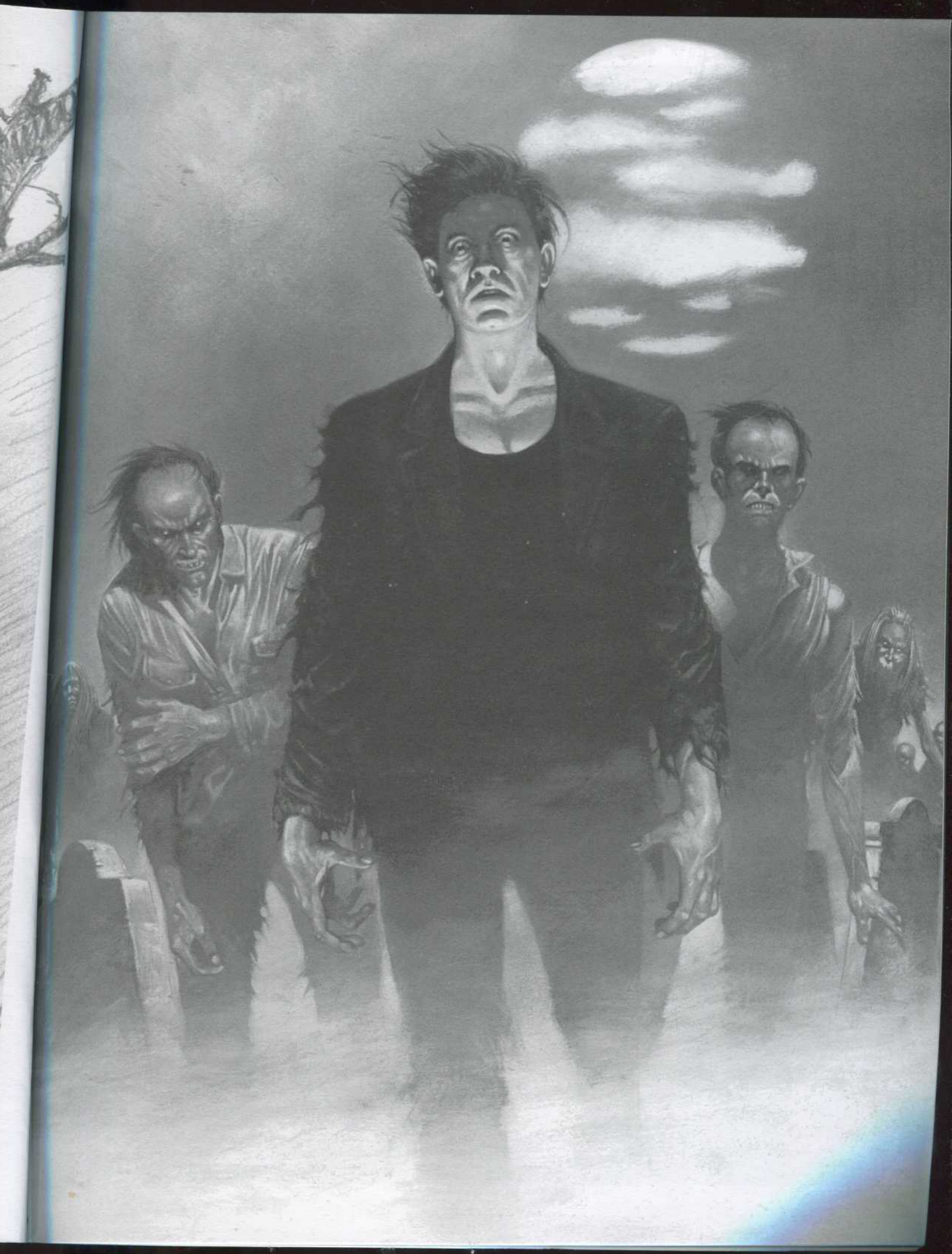

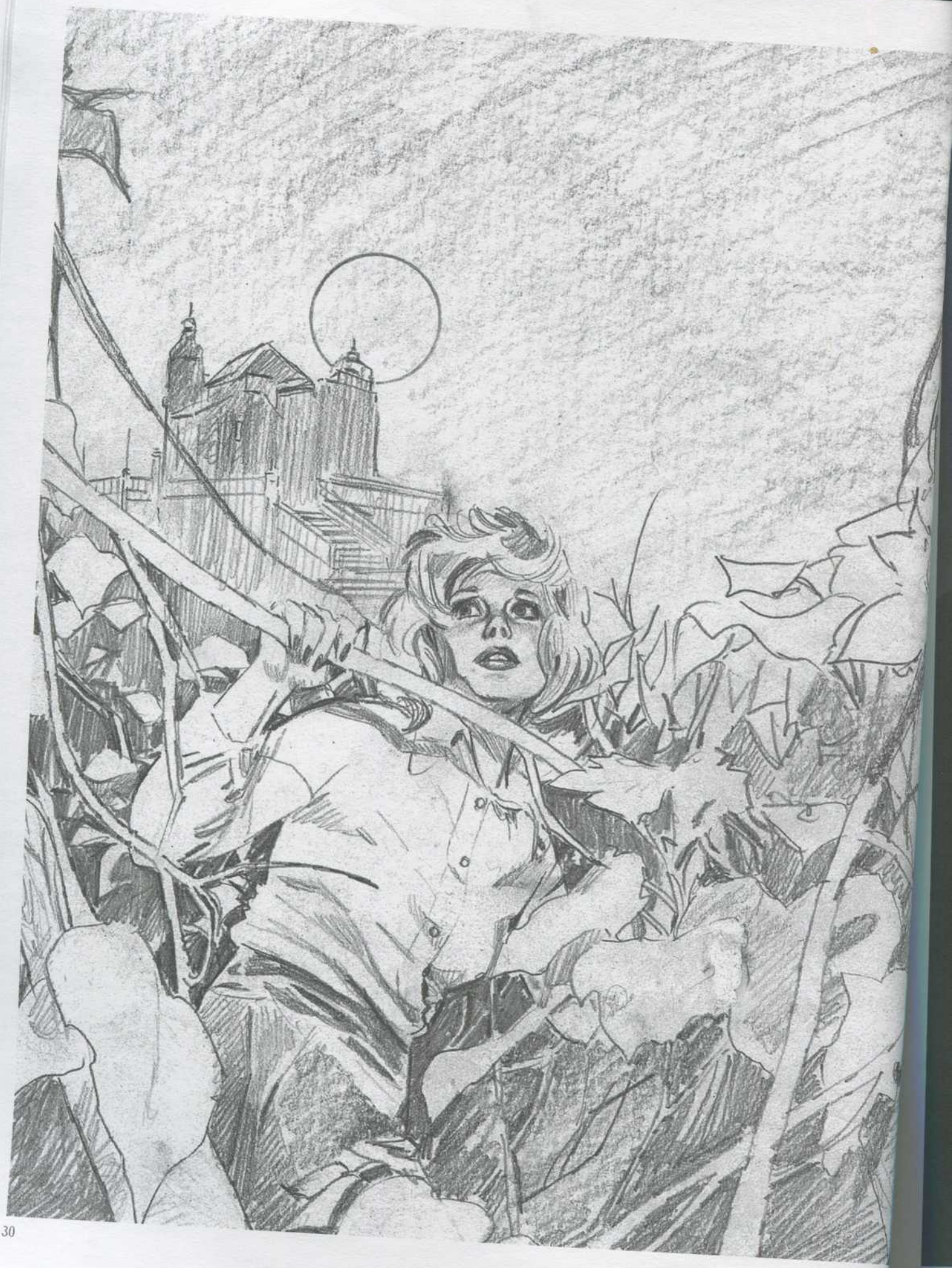

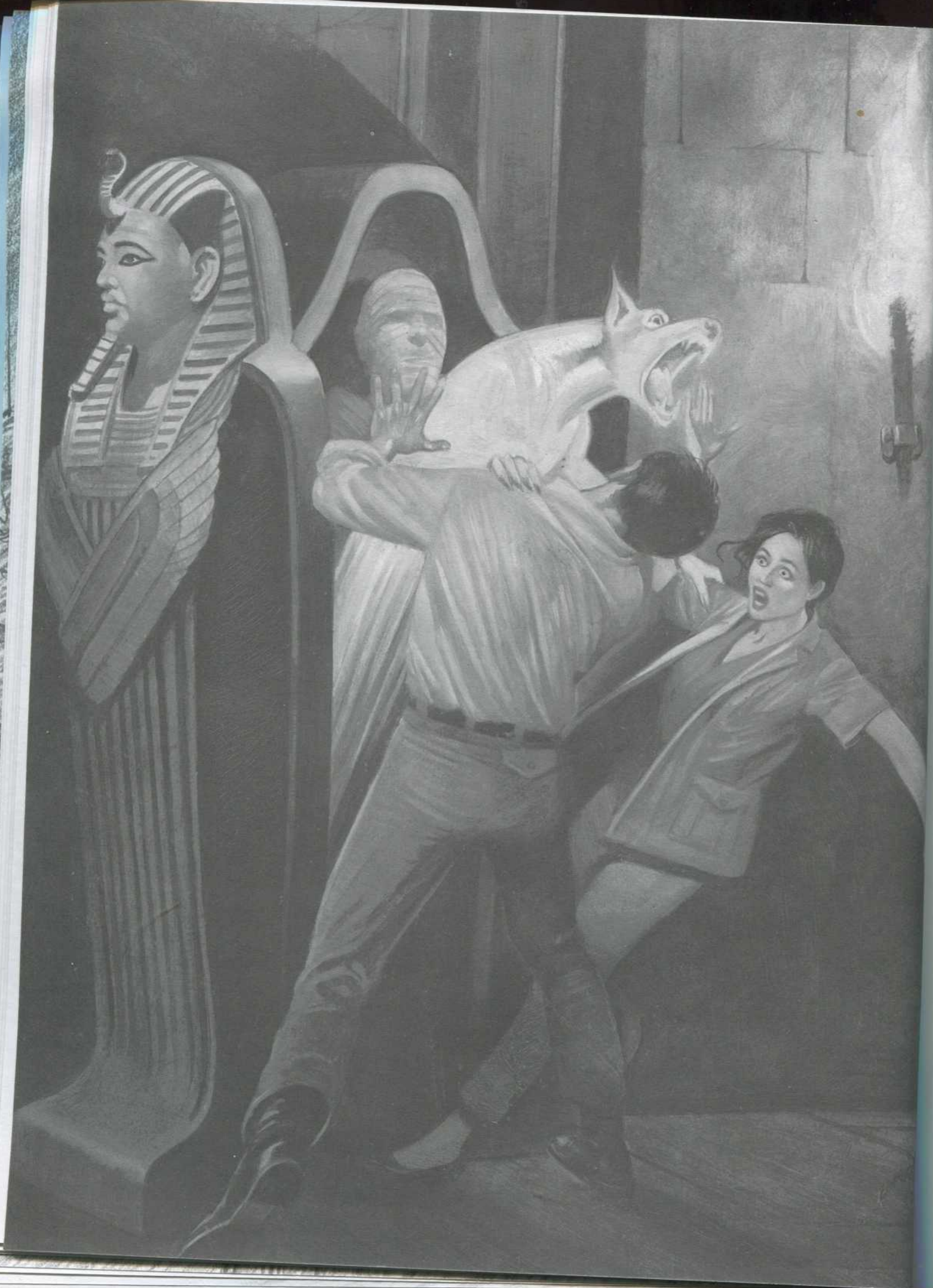

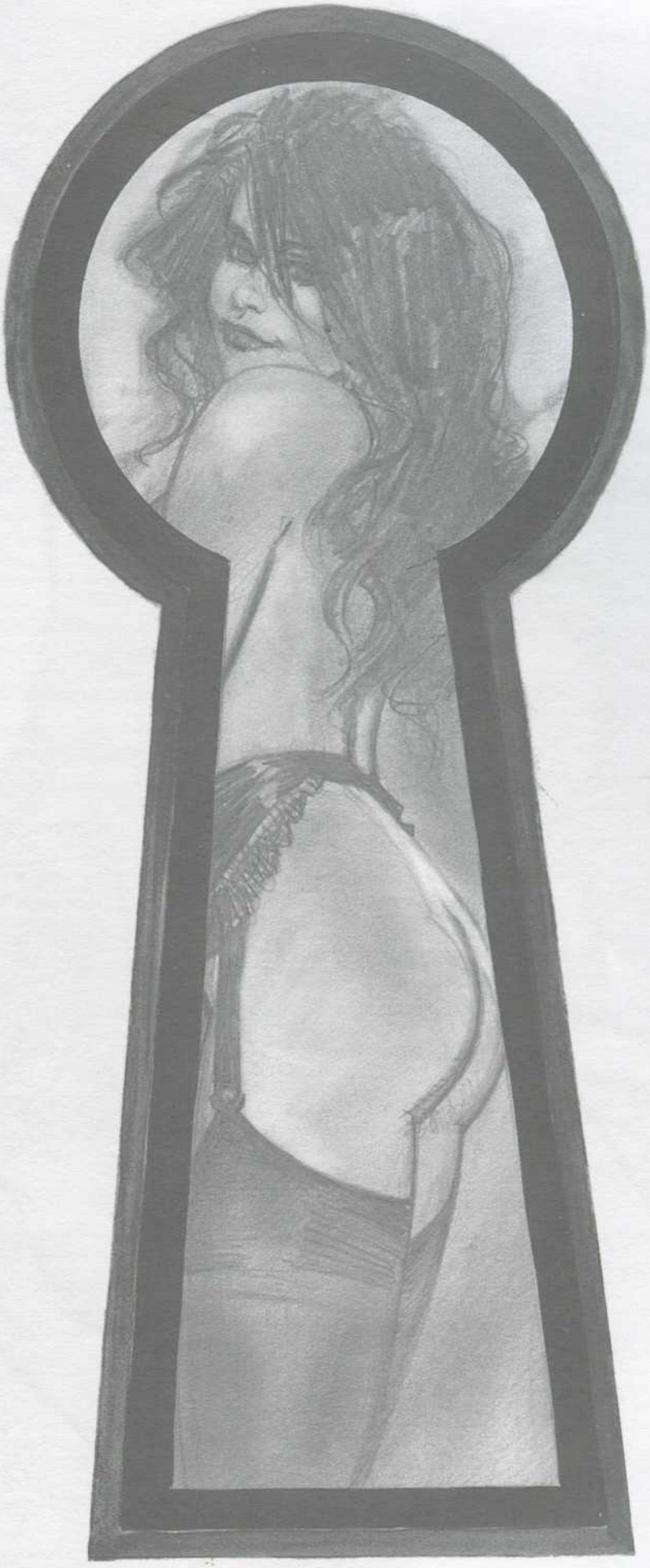

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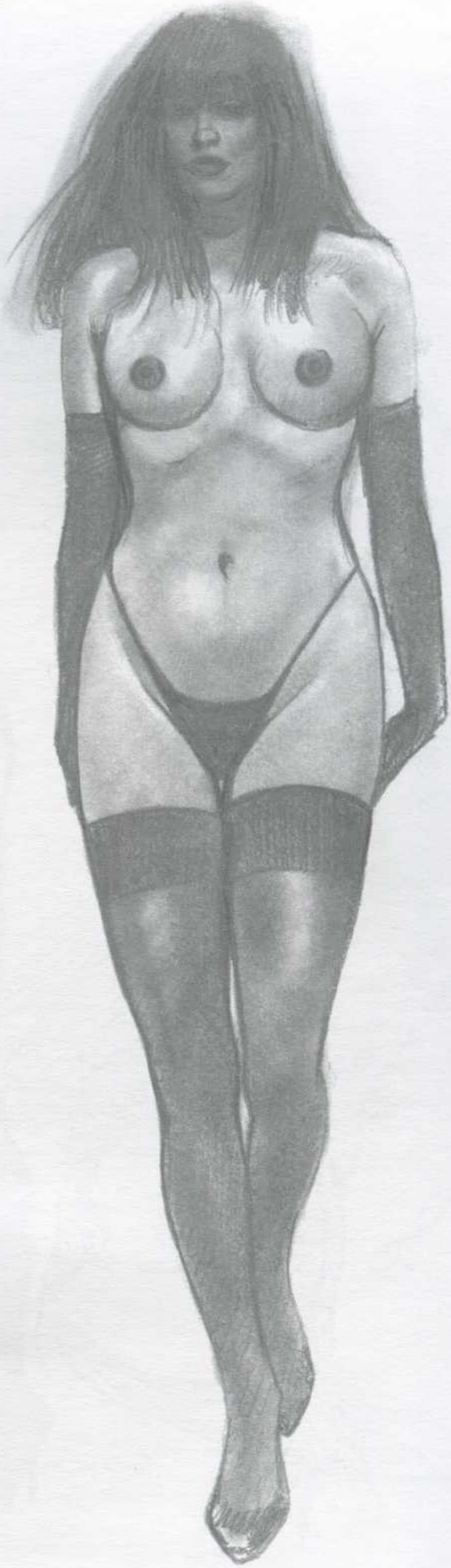

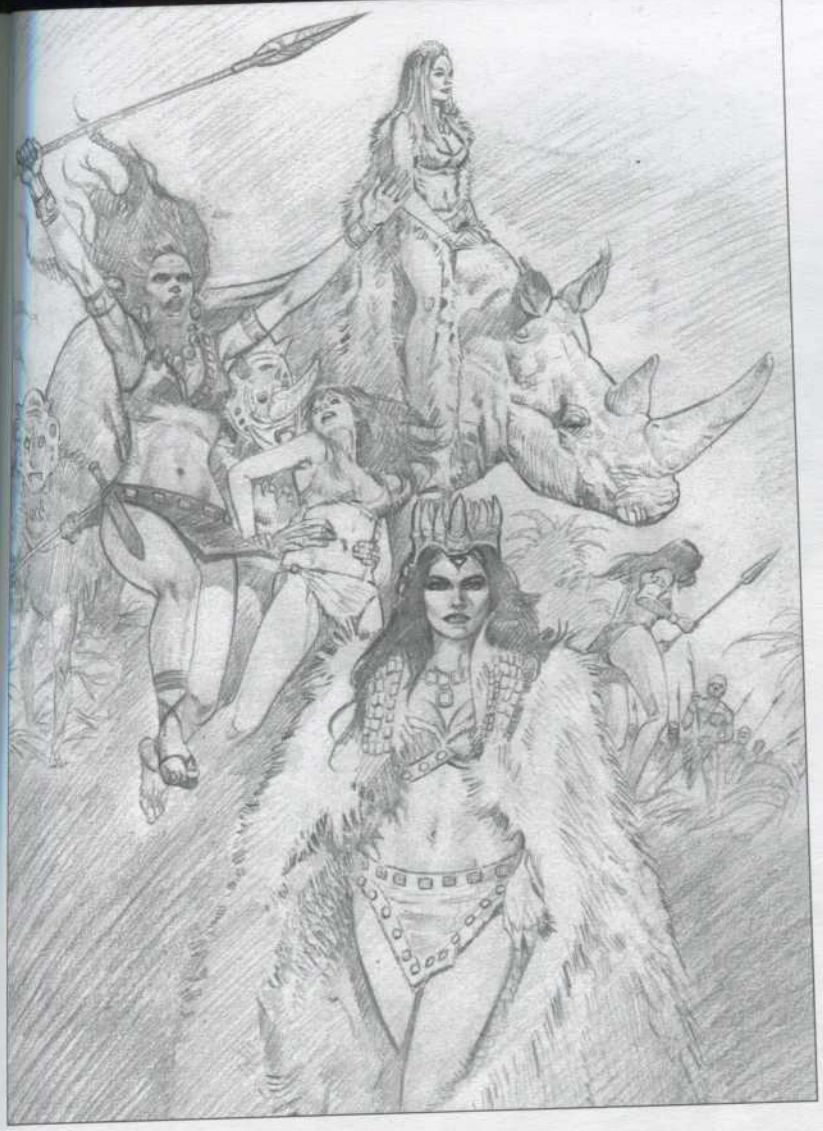

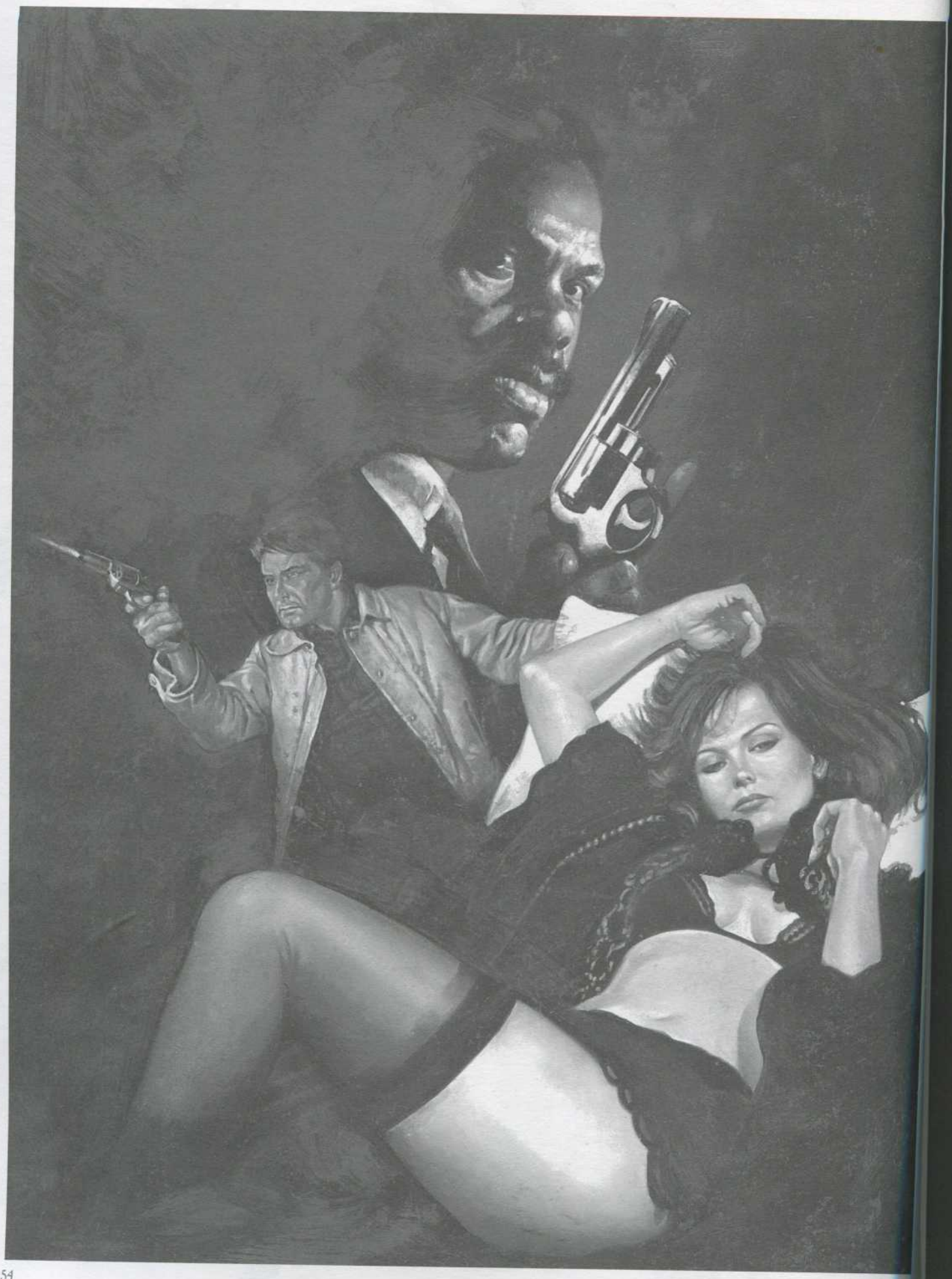

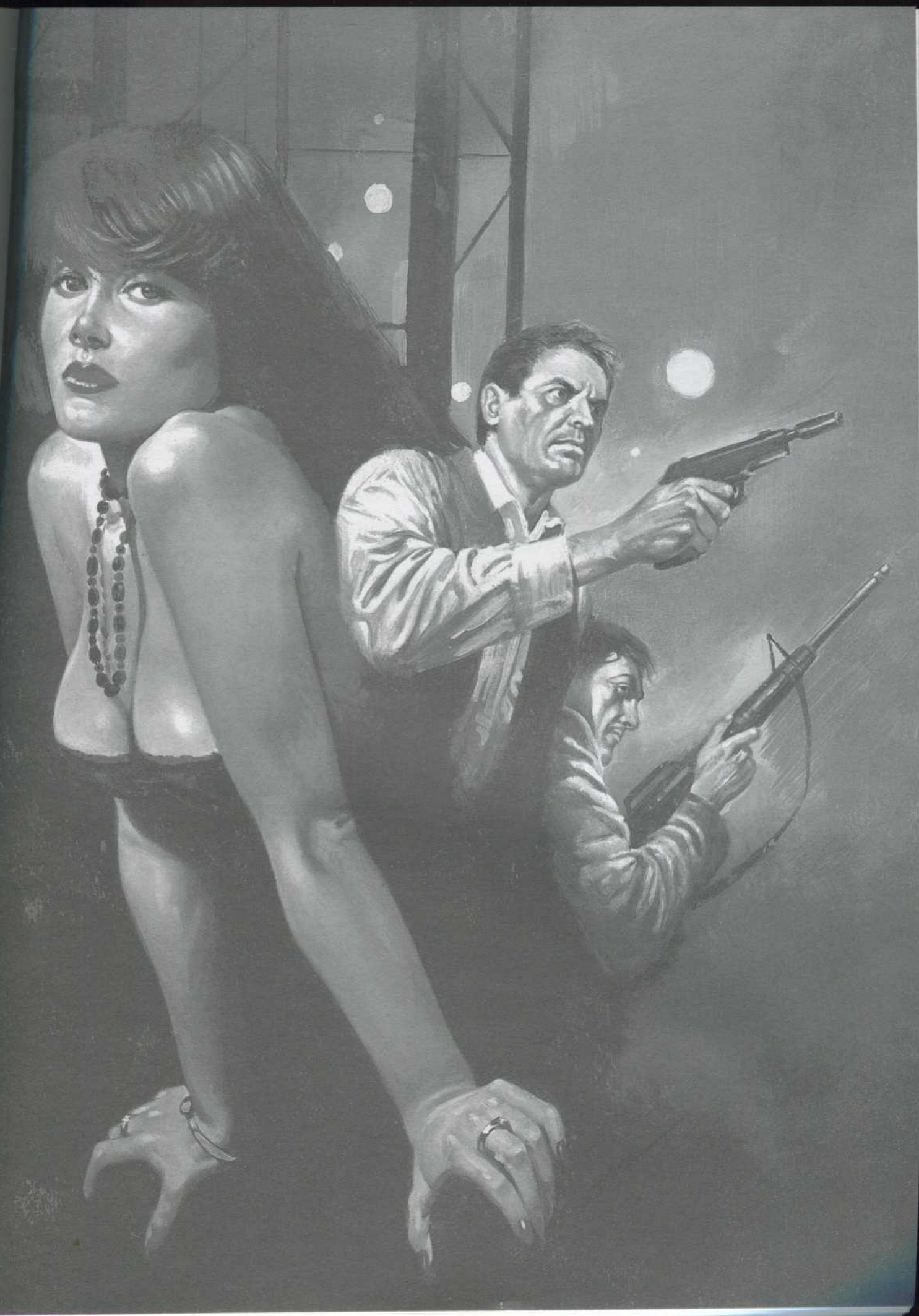

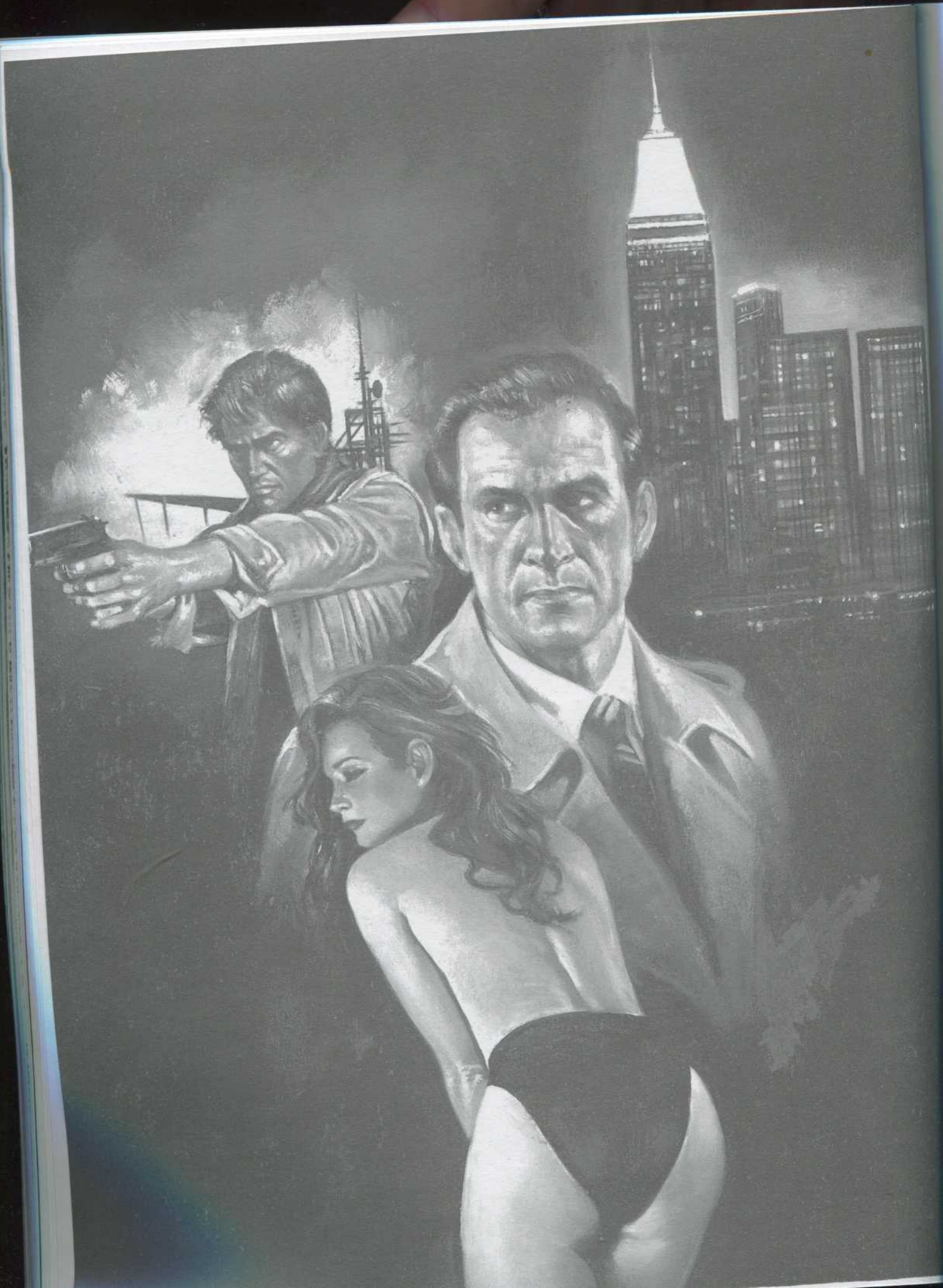

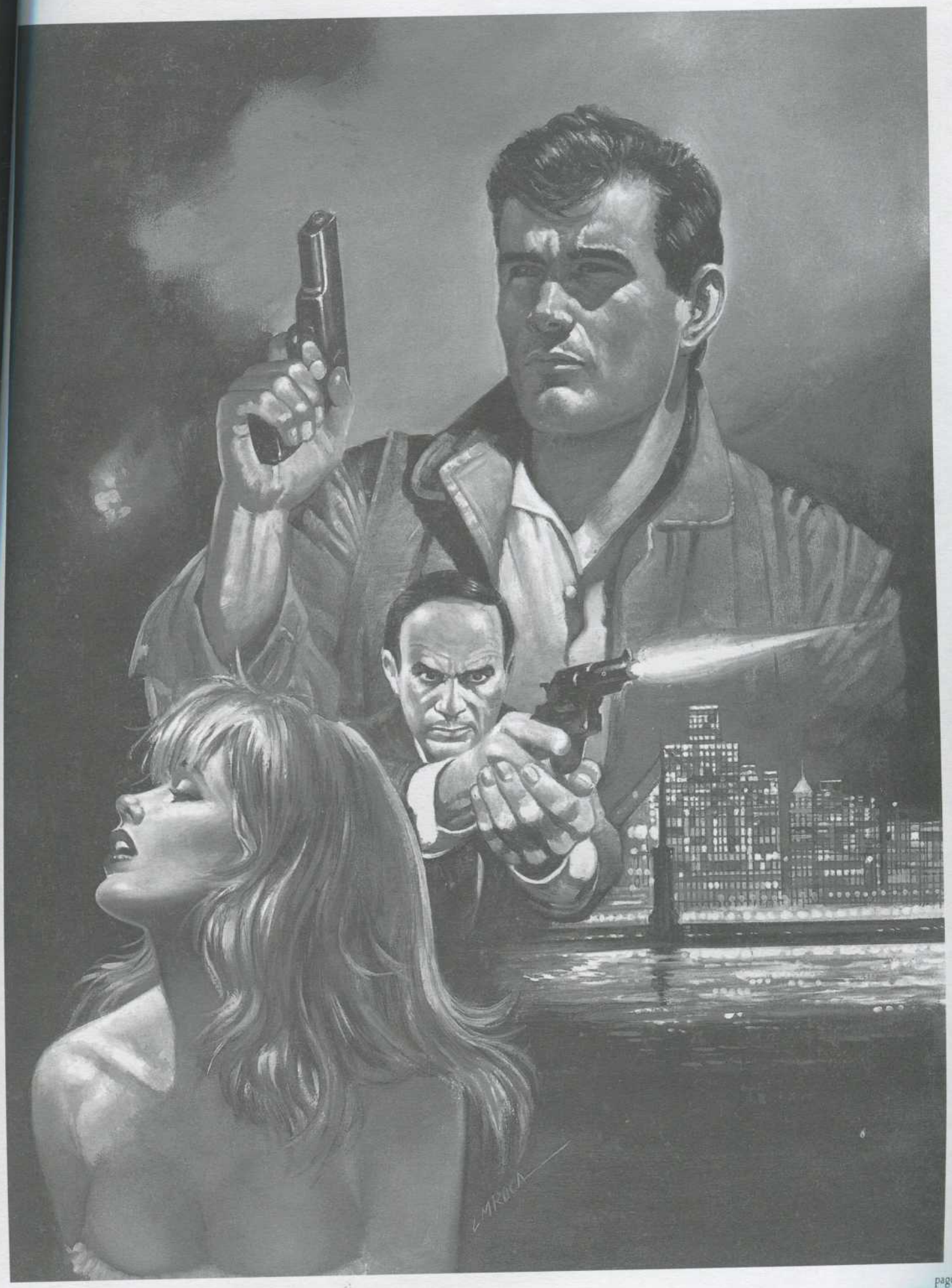

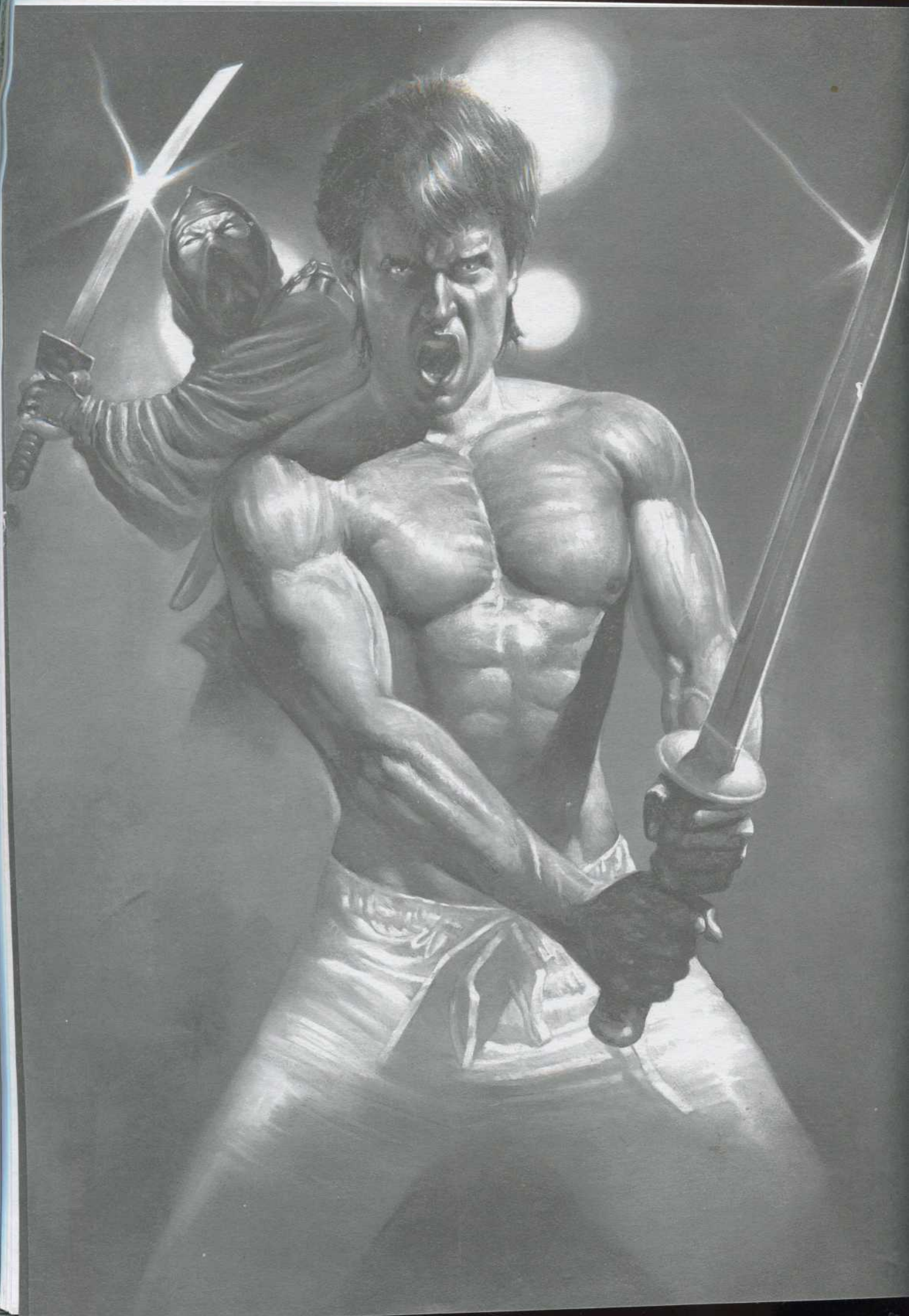

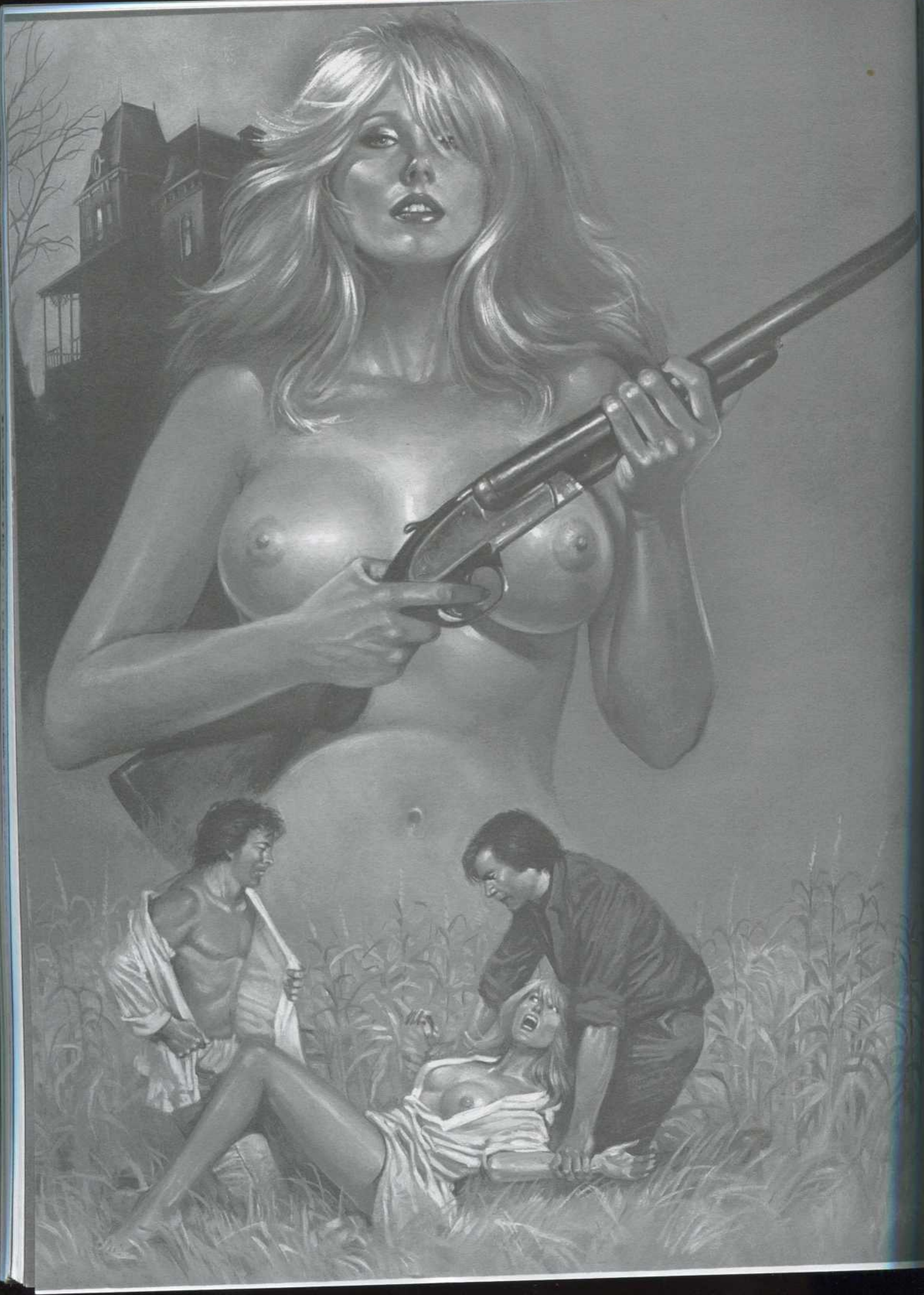

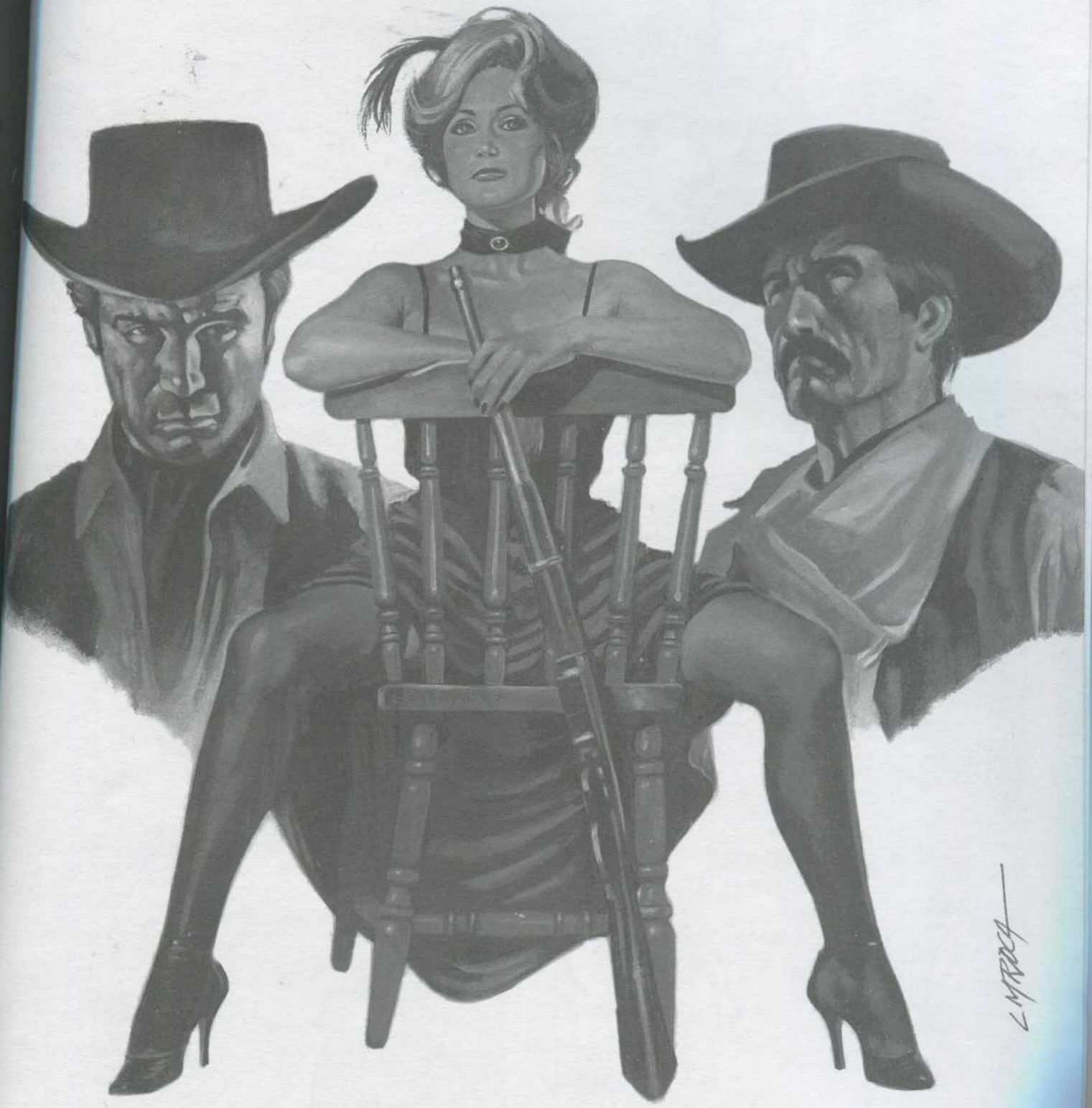

*Luis Martínez Roca forged an international following through his combination of talent and imagination. From the exotic curves of Vampirella and savage power of Conan, to the dozens of fully realized paperback paintings, his unique visions have always had a sense of excitement and drama.*

*This volume contains sketches, studies, and finished pieces that give new insight into the craft of illustration, as practiced by one of the fantasy greats - Roca!*

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